

Housing



Spring 2010

Center News

Housing Celebrates Fair Housing Month; Releases Annual State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio Report Finds Housing Discrimination Complaints Remains High: Most Still Based on Race and Disability

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center, in celebration of Fair Housing Month, released its fifth annual "The State of Fair Housing In Northeast Ohio: April 2010" report. The report found that although complaints of housing discrimination in Northeast Ohio decreased by 10 percent in 2009 compared to 2008, the number remained significantly higher than the average number of complaints filed in the last 20 years and represented the second highest yearly total since 1990.

The report, based on the number of complaints filed in the region with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), found that 223 complaints were filed in 2009, compared to 254 in 2008 and a 20-year average of 125.2 complaints in the region. The Housing Center's report also examined trends in discrimination complaints over the last ten years, finding an 85% increase in complaints filed from 2005-2009, when an average of 181.6 complaints were filed each year, compared to the previous five-year period, when the yearly average was 98. This increase was due to a 64.3% increase in the number of cases based on

disability and a 60.9% increase in the number of cases based on race.

The Housing Center estimates that there are annually at least 33,690 instances of housing discrimination in the region against African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the rental and sales markets, meaning the vast majority of cases are never reported to a government agency.

"The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio: April 2010", is the Housing Center's fifth annual comprehensive survey of fair housing in Northeast Ohio, analyzing housing discrimination and segregation in a six-county region (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties). The study further found that the number of cases brought based on familial status, national origin, sex/gender, and religion also increased; that the most common bases of discrimination alleged were race, disability, and familial status; and that over the 20-year period, 1990-2009, cases filed alleging race discrimination accounted for 39.6% of the total,

compared to 23.4% for disability, 19.3% for familial status. From 1990-2009, almost three-quarters of the complaints (73.9%) were filed in Cuyahoga County.

The report, which can be downloaded from the website, www.thehousingcenter.org, recommends enacting stronger local fair housing laws, restoring Ohio's fair housing law to make it equivalent to federal fair housing laws at all levels, strengthening the commitment of governments that receive federal funds to "affirmatively further fair housing," creating a federal Consumer Financial Protection Agency, increasing monitoring and investigations of mortgage lenders, implementing comprehensive education efforts, ensuring that all online housing advertisements fully comply with fair housing laws, and providing government incentives and other creative solutions to combat housing discrimination and racial and economic segregation.

"The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio" report received press coverage on Cleveland's NPR affiliate, WCPN.

Housing Center Celebrates its Fifth Annual Wine & Cheese

On April 29th, the Housing Center held its annual fundraiser to celebrate Fair Housing Month and to release its annual State of Fair Housing Report. The Fifth Annual Wine & Cheese Fundraiser & Art Exhibition at Trinity Commons honored civil rights attorney Diane Citrino and Cuyahoga County Treasurer Jim Rokakis. They were presented with plaques recognizing their contributions to fight housing discrimination in the community.

The event featured the works of local artists Steve Cagan, Amy Roskilly, David Rankin and Cleveland Institute of Art student Meagan Gerhke. Attendees were treated to the musical stylings of classical acoustic guitarist Rick Icaboni. The Housing Center's staff, board and community supporters were on hand to savor delicious wines and appetizers and to win great raffle prizes such as the Classic Wine Lover's and Date Night baskets. The Wine & Cheese was attended by 77 people.

The event was sponsored by Kondik Advertising (Advocate Sponsor), Dollar Bank (Supporter Sponsor), Charter One Bank and Third Federal Savings Bank (Patron Sponsors), Westside Housing Center (Activist Sponsor) and Ag Real Estate Group Inc. (Friend Sponsor). Thank you to all local businesses who donated items for our raffle baskets.



Above l-r: Diane Citrino, Jeff Dillman, & Jim Rokakis



Classic Wine Lover's Basket



HRAC Staff l-r: Denise Cooper, Dana Cohen, Darlene English, Carrie Pleasants, Samantha Hoover, & Jeffrey Dillman

Fair Housing News

Cleveland, Akron and Summit County Pass Inclusive Municipal Non-Discrimination Ordinances

Cleveland City Council voted 21-0 to protect against discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations based on gender identity and expression. Akron voted 10-2 to do the same based on both sexual orientation and gender identity, and Summit County voted 11-1 to pass a countywide ordinance protecting against discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Texas Fair Housing Lawsuit Settled

Under the terms of a Conciliation Agreement approved by HUD in May, the State of Texas will conduct updated research into impediments to fair housing in the state and ensure that disaster recovery housing spending "affirmatively furthers fair housing."

The agreement arises from a lawsuit brought by Texas Low Income Housing Information Service and Texas Appleseed against the State of Texas. As a result of the lawsuit, HUD had withheld \$1.7 billion in Community Development Block Grant funds that had been appropriated for hurricane recovery efforts because of concerns about the state's failure to address fair

housing and affordable housing needs in its programs. Under the agreement, 55% of the money will be spent to help low- and moderate-income families. In addition, the state will rebuild all of the public housing units that were destroyed in Galveston and create new programs to help low-income and minority residents find housing in less-segregated or storm-vulnerable areas.

The groups were represented by the law firm of Relman, Dane & Colfax, which is co-counsel in one of the Housing Center's current accessibility cases.

HUD Adds Important Civil Rights Protections to Its Grant Programs

For the first time in its history, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will require grant applicants seeking HUD funding to comply with state and local anti-discrimination laws that protect lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. Traditionally, HUD requires all applicants for competitive grant funding to comply with all applicable federal fair housing and civil rights requirements. Now HUD will further stipulate that applicants and their sub-recipients must comply with state or local laws proscribing housing discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

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Mission:

To eliminate housing discrimination
and assure choice in Northeast Ohio
by providing those at risk with effective
information, intervention and advocacy.

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Spotlight on HRAC

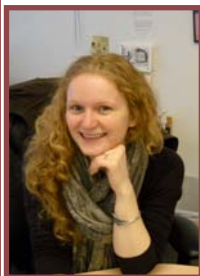
Housing Center Announces New Board Member

Jan Cline



The Housing Center is pleased to welcome onto its board Jan Cline, Executive Director of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Community Center of Greater Cleveland. A resident of the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood, Jan previously served as the Director of Development for the Gordon Square Arts District, promoting arts and economic development. A native of Northeast Ohio, Jan has not only been a friend of the Housing Center for many years, but he is also a former employee, working as its Development Director at one time. His breadth of experience includes nonprofit fundraising and management, as well as a variety of social justice causes such as LGBT issues, AIDS education, at-risk youth, mental health advocacy, hunger relief and fair housing regulation. To that end, when asked why he wanted to serve on the Housing Center's Board he stated, "Because I care about fairness and social justice. From working at the Housing Center, I learned that just because there is a law on the books, doesn't necessarily ensure equal treatment under it. The work that the Housing Center does is vital to making sure the law is enforced and to identify housing trends of concern. It's important work." Important work that couldn't be done without committed board members. Welcome Jan!

Housing Center Bids Farewell, Welcome



Samantha Hoover, the Housing Center's Fair Housing Research Associate is leaving after two years. She is marrying her high school sweetheart, First Lieutenant Russell Dawson of the United States Marine Corp., and moving to Florida where they will be stationed. As a research associate, Samantha co-authored several publications including "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Ohio Mortgage Lending" and "The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio: April 2010." The staff and board of the Housing Center wish her well!



The Housing Center welcomes Krissie Wells, our new Fair Housing Research Associate. Krissie recently graduated from Case Western Reserve's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences with a Master's degree in Social Administration. She earned dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in sociology and religion from Wittenberg University. Previous experience includes internships with Planned Parenthood, The Boys and Girls Club and The Cleveland Foundation's Summer Internship Program. Welcome Krissie!

**HOUSING
RESEARCH & ADVOCACY
CENTER**

A New Era of Housing Justice

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Spring 2010

Upcoming Events

**Landlord & Rental Property
Owners Fair Housing Seminar**
Tuesday, June 29, 2010
6:00 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.
Parma City Hall
6611 Ridge Road
Parma, OH 44129
Free of Charge—One CEU credit
Registration Required

Shaker Heights Landlord Training
Saturday, September 11, 2010
8:45 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.
Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Community Building
3450 Lee Road-Shaker Heights
Free of Charge—Six CEU credits
Light breakfast provided
lunch hour on own

North Olmsted Realtor Training
Thursday, September 23, 2010
1:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.
North Olmsted Library
27403 Lorain Road
North Olmsted, OH 44070
Free of Charge—Three CEU credits
Registration Required

The Housing Center conducts a number of fair housing trainings for landlords and realtors, as well as for individuals. We are also available to speak at various meetings. For information about any of our events, or to register, please contact the Housing Center's Education & Outreach Coordinator, Darlene English, at 216-361-9240.

Donations are a vital part of the Housing Center's operations, and any amount is welcome. To make a donation, please mail this tear-off form with a check made payable to the Housing Center to: 3631 Perkins Avenue, Ste. 3A-2, Cleveland, Ohio 44114. Donations can also be made on the Housing Center website, www.thehousingcenter.org or through Greater Cleveland Community Shares, www.communityshares.org.

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