

**The
Housing**



Research & Advocacy Center
news

*Winter 2006
Annual Report*

2005 in Review

Last year was a busy one for the Housing Research & Advocacy Center. In 2005, the Housing Center welcomed our new Executive Director, Jeffrey Dillman as well as a new Board President, Patricia Burgess. We have continued our work in fair housing enforcement, research and education and outreach to assure housing choice in Northeast Ohio.

Grants & Contracts

In 2005, the Housing Center received funding from the **Cuyahoga County Department of Development**, the **City of Lakewood**, the **City of Parma**, the **City of Cleveland Heights**, the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**, and the **Raymond John Wean Foundation**.

The two largest grants completed in 2005 were from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In August, the Housing Center completed an 18-month Enforcement grant from HUD, for which we completed more than 200 rental, sales, and lending audits. As a result of these tests, the Housing Center is pursuing a number of charges of discrimination.

In November, the Housing Center completed a one-year education and outreach grant from HUD. This grant paid for a two-day conference on housing for people with disabilities, in addition to a number of smaller seminars related to fair housing.

In September of 2005, the Housing Center was awarded a new Private Enforcement Initiative grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which will fund our testing program. Over the next 18 months, we will be conducting over 200 tests in Northeast Ohio to ensure that all citizens have equal access to housing.

Education & Outreach

Our education programs were in full force this year with 16 events which educated over 500 people on various relevant topics.

We held 10 seminars on fair housing laws, a seminar on fair housing and manufactured home parks, and a seminar on fair housing and homelessness. We also held two seminars on predatory lending for consumers and an additional seminar for law enforcement officials.

In September, the Housing Center held a highly successful two-

day conference titled *Access to Housing for People with Disabilities*. We wrapped up the year in December with a day long program for lawyers on Predatory Lending and Foreclosure Defense.

Each of these events offered CEU's (for real estate professionals and/or social workers) or CLE (for attorneys) credits so our attendees have the opportunity to learn and uphold their professional licenses.

Thank you to all of our attendees and speakers who made our 2005 education programs a success. Special thanks to our funders who made these programs possible.

Enforcement & Litigation:

In 2005, the Housing Research & Advocacy Center settled a number of fair housing complaints. In December of 2004, the Housing Center filed a complaint with HUD against a landlord in the City of Parma alleging discrimination against families with children and African-Americans. This case was referred by HUD to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) and was settled in July. The Housing Center received monetary damages, and the landlord was required to attend fair housing training.

2005 in Review (continued)

In March, the Housing Center filed a complaint with the OCRC based on disability discrimination at a rental unit in the City of Lakewood. The case was settled in September, and the Housing Center received monetary damages. The landlord is required to attend fair housing training.

In August of 2004, the Housing Center filed a complaint with HUD alleging discrimination by an owner of a single family home against African-Americans and families with children. The case settled in March of 2005. The Housing Center received monetary damages, and the owner attended fair housing training.

In the last year, the Housing Center settled two cases involving complaints filed against owners of multi-family buildings that did not

meet accessibility guidelines. The Housing Center recovered monetary damages and attorneys fees in these cases, and the owners were required to make modifications to the buildings to increase accessibility.

Research:

In 2005, the Housing Center completed the Analysis of Lending Patterns in the City of Cleveland Heights under a contract with the City. In addition, in 2005, the Housing Center completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing report (AI) for the City of Lakewood and, with the assistance of the Housing Advocates, Inc., completed an AI for the City of East Cleveland.

Moving forward in 2006:

In the coming year, the Housing Center is planning a number of events to raise the profile of fair housing and fair lending in Northeast Ohio. In April (Fair Housing Month), we will be issuing a first-of-its-kind report entitled "The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio." The report will cover topics including local fair housing ordinances, housing patterns, segregation, fair housing

complaints, and recommendations for future action. Also in April, we will be having our first Wine and Cheese Reception to raise money for the Housing Center and allow us to continue our work. Tickets cost \$25.00 per person. For details or tickets, please contact us at (216) 361-9240.

Finally, this coming year we are planning on issuing a series of reports on subprime and predatory

Website:

We have updated our website to include our upcoming events for 2006 and have also added a Resource section. Currently on our resource page:

1. Referral List of Housing Related Services for People with Disabilities
2. An overview of Predatory Lending
3. Purchase a binder from "Access to Housing for People with Disabilities" conference (Sept. 2005)

In the coming months we will be adding all the fair housing ordinances of Northeast Ohio with a quick reference table linking to each city. Be sure to check back often for updates!

lending, detailing specific regional trends and problems. Subprime lending has hit Ohio in general, and Northeast Ohio in particular, extremely hard. Ohio has the dubious distinction of leading the nation in foreclosures, with double the national average. In Cuyahoga County, foreclosures have increased from nearly five-fold from 1995 to 2005.

The Housing Center wishes to extend its sincerest thanks to all of our Annual Donors for 2005

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Office Assistant

**term begins March 2006*

Spotlight on The Board: Vanessa Randolph

Ms. Randolph is the Director in Fannie Mae's Northern Ohio Community Business Center. The Community Business Center is one of 55 offices in the nation dedicated to helping increase affordable rental and homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate-, and middle-income families and first-time home buyers.

She is responsible for helping to implement the \$44 billion American Dream CommitmentSM Affordable Housing Plan for Northern Ohio. The investment plan will provide affordable homeownership and rental opportunities for 450,000 Northern Ohio individuals and families in 29 counties.

Ms. Randolph received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administrative Services from the University of Toledo and is currently pursuing graduate studies. Ms. Randolph has over 16 years of financial services experience.

She is a former vice president and national underwriting



manager of KeyBank in Cleveland; former assistant vice president and residential mortgage lending manager at National City Bank's Northwest Ohio Region; and she has held several positions, including community relations officer and loan officer, at Society National Bank (now known as KeyBank).

The Housing Center Update Corner...

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center would like to welcome our new Fair Housing intern, Hope Farmby. Hope is a native of Chicago, IL, and moved to Cleveland a year ago. She recently graduated from the John Marshall Law School in Chicago while attending classes as a visiting student at Cleveland Marshall Law School.

While in Chicago, she participated in the John Marshall Fair Housing Clinic and the

Predatory Lending Clinic. After moving to Cleveland, she worked in Cleveland Marshall's fair housing clinic. Hope is married and plans to take the Ohio Bar Exam in July.



THE HOUSING CENTER MISSION

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

**THE HOUSING
RESEARCH & ADVOCACY
CENTER**

A New Era of Housing Justice

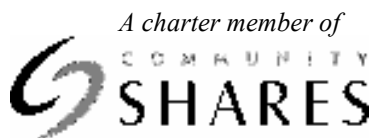
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Check out
our Website!

www.thehousingcenter.org



SAVE THE DATE!!

March 11th - Fair Housing and Lead Issues - Lakewood City Hall 9:30am - 12:00pm

March 28th - Fair Housing Laws & Disability Awareness - North Olmsted Library 6:00pm - 8:00pm

April 11th - Fair Housing Laws & Disability Awareness - Shaker Heights Community Life Building 6:00pm - 8:00pm

April 13th - Wine and Cheese Reception - 5:30pm - 7:30pm

May 16th - Fair Housing Laws - Maple Heights Library 6:00pm - 7:30pm

For more information on these events or to register, call the Housing Center 216/361-9240

And **YOU** can help too! Support **Housing Justice** by supporting the **Housing Center**.
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