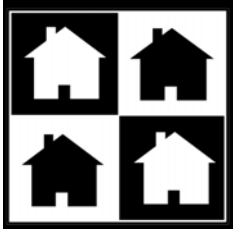


Fall 2007

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center news



Housing Center and Heights Community Congress Announce Strategic Partnership

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center and Heights Community Congress (HCC) recently announced that they have entered into a strategic partnership to work together on a variety of projects that will serve their respective missions and strengthen the region. While they will continue to operate as separate organizations, through their collaborative efforts, the recently-formed *Fair Housing and Diversity Partnership* will allow the Housing Center and HCC to share certain resources and undertake joint activities in the region.

Housing Center Executive Director Jeffrey D. Dillman noted that this partnership is an exciting opportunity for the organizations and the region. "While our organizations have collaborated on individual projects in the past, this partnership has the potential to build on the strengths of each of our organiza-

tions and further our shared goals of eradicating housing discrimination and promoting social justice."

Kasey Greer, Executive Director of HCC, agreed, noting that the partnership will have a significant impact on improving the social and economic health of the region, "Given our combined accomplishments and strengths in the areas of fair housing, fair lending and community engagement, we look forward to a fruitful and productive partnership that will yield great benefits as it relates to the quality of life in our region."

Heights Community Congress was established in 1972 as one of the first fair housing agencies in Cuyahoga County. Based in Cleveland Heights, HCC's mission is to be an advocate of social justice, a monitor of fair housing and a facilitator of community building. In addition to the fair housing services it has provided for 35 years, HCC has developed its diversity program that includes forums on issues of race, class and diversity, workshops and training sessions, and a host of other community engage-

ment activities, designed to encourage people to respect, acknowledge and appreciate each other's similarities and differences.

The Housing Center Board and staff look forward to working more closely with Heights Community Congress.

Housing Center Receives Two HUD Fair Housing Grants

In September, the Housing Center learned that it was awarded two fair housing grants by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The first is a one-year education and outreach grant that will fund us to provide various types of fair housing education, including two conferences. The second grant is a three-year enforcement grant that will fund us to conduct research and fair housing enforcement activities in the region. The Housing Center is one of only two organizations in the country to receive two grants this year.

Recent Events

This past summer, the Housing Center held a number of events on fair housing laws, access to housing for people with disabilities, avoiding predatory lending, and lending trends in our region.

On August 23, the Housing Center conducted a half day conference, *Fair Housing Laws: Current Issues Affecting the Elderly and People with Disabilities*. This conference was held at the Visiting Nurses Association, in partnership with the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and the Cuyahoga County Bar Association. Speakers at this conference included the Housing Center's Executive Director, Jeffrey Dillman; local fair housing attorney Diane Citrino, from the law firm of Kushner & Hamed Co. LPA; Susan

Silverstein, a senior attorney from the AARP Foundation in Washington D.C.; and Deborah Arntz, a Housing Specialist from the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging. Speakers presented on topics related to access to housing for people with disabilities.

On Tuesday, August 14, 2007, the Housing Center staff held a briefing of our recently published report "City of Cleveland Community Lending Factbook." The Factbook provides basic information on home mortgage lending in each of the City's 36 statistical planning areas. This report complements the Housing Center's "Cuyahoga County Community Lending Factbook," which provides similar data for the County and each of its 58 cities and

villages. Copies of both of these reports, as well as a PowerPoint presentation from the briefing, can be found on the Housing Center's website at www.thehousingcenter.org.

In addition, the Housing Center has conducted Fair Housing Law trainings for landlords and realtors throughout the region. These events were sponsored by The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Lakewood, and Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners.

Throughout the summer and early fall, the Housing Center has also presented a number of anti-predatory lending seminars to community and union groups, which were sponsored by a grant from the Wean Foundation.

Support the Housing Research & Advocacy Center at Your Workplace

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center is a member of Community Shares and is currently participating in the fall charitable giving campaign. To donate to the Housing Research & Advocacy Center at your workplace:

If your employer offers a Community Shares campaign, you may choose to designate your pledge to the Housing Research & Advocacy Center. Simply write us in on your pledge form.

If your employer provides a United Way-only campaign, you can still give to the Housing Research & Advocacy Center through the Donor Option program. In the "Other Local Health

and Human Service Agencies" section of the United Way pledge form, simply write in the Housing Research & Advocacy Center. Please note that the Donor Option program requires a minimum donation of \$100.

If you are a federal worker, you can donate to us through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). We are #49960.

If you are a state worker, you can donate to us through the Combined Charitable Campaigns, State of Ohio. We are #4518.

Your donation to the Housing Research & Advocacy Center is tax-deductible.

Housing Center Releases Report on Occupancy Codes in Northeast Ohio

The Housing Center recently released a report on Occupancy Codes in Northeast Ohio. For this report, the Housing Center collected and reviewed occupancy codes for every city in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties.

The report is useful in determining if a local jurisdiction has an occupancy code, and if so, how many people are allowed to reside in a unit based on its size.

A copy of the report can be found on the Housing Center's website at www.thehousingcenter.org.



The Housing Center

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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.

Fair Housing Brochures Available

The Housing Center has recently created three new fair housing brochures, including a general fair housing law brochure, a fair housing and disability brochure, and a fair housing and familial status brochure. These brochures were created as part of a U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development Education & Outreach Grant. If you are interested in receiving free copies of the brochures in English, Spanish and/or Arabic, please contact our office at 216-361-9240, or e-mail Carrie Pleasants at cpleasants@thehousingcenter.org

Spotlight on The Board: Kathy Kazol

Kathy Kazol is the Executive Director of Emerald Development & Economic Network, Inc., a non-profit housing development agency for special needs populations. Ms. Kazol has over 30 years of management experience in the social service field and over 15 years experience in housing development and property management for special needs populations. Ms. Kazol is the former Executive Director of the Geauga County Mental Health Board and a member of the Advisory Board for the Continuum of Care, local

planning process for the provision of services to persons who are homeless. She has a highly successful track record of generating grant funding for housing development and operations for special needs low-income populations. Ms. Kazol attended Graduate School at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences through Case Western Reserve University, where she earned a Master's of Science in Social Administration Degree.

Housing Center Staff News

The Housing Center Board and staff would like to welcome Meran Chang, our new Fair Housing Intern to our staff.

Meran currently attends Case Western Reserve University, where she is pursuing a Master's of Non-profit organizations.

Upcoming Events in 2008

The Housing Center is planning a number of educational events in 2008, please check our website for updated information about these event.

- 3rd Annual Wine & Cheese Reception—April 2008
- Fair Housing and Accessibility Conference—May/June 2008
- Fair Housing Law and Landlord /Tenant Law training for landlords—a number of these trainings will be held throughout Cuyahoga County in 2008
- New Directions in Fair Housing Regional Conference—October/November 2008
- Predatory Lending Training for Consumers—Several of these trainings will be held in 2008 throughout Cuyahoga County

**THE HOUSING
RESEARCH & ADVOCACY
CENTER**

A New Era of Housing Justice

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throughout Northeast Ohio

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