

COMMITTED TO FAIR HOUSING FOR ALL

FALL 2015

Civil Rights Pioneers Remembered: Julian Bond, Louis Stokes

The Housing Center along with the Fair Housing Community mourns the loss of two great leaders and central figures in the fight for equality.

Julian Bond was Chairman of the NAACP and a Georgia State Representative. He began at the forefront of the 1960s civil rights movement. While a student at Morehouse College, he challenged and led protests against legal segregation. That passion inspired him to establish the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Throughout his life, he advocated not just for African Americans, but for every person subject to oppression and discrimination. He would become the first president of the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization dedicated to fighting hate and seeking justice for the most vulnerable in society. In 1965, Julian was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. Julian Bond passed away this summer at the age of 75. President Obama said of Julian, "Justice & equality was the mission that spanned his life. Julian Bond helped change this country for the better. And what better way to be remembered

than that."

Cleveland's own, Congressman Louis Stokes was known as a champion of the poor. He served in the United States Army, serving mostly in the segregated south. There, he fully realized the inequalities he would spend the rest of his life fighting. After earning his Juris Doctorate from Cleveland Marshall School of Law, he started a law firm with his brother Carl Stokes, Cleveland's first African American Mayor. As a young civil rights attorney Congressman Stokes fought for congressional redistricting, creating Ohio's first predominantly African American district, which he would later represent for 30 years upon his election in 1969. He established the Congressional Black Caucus and also headed the special Housing Committee on Assassinations, investigating the deaths of President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He also served as the head of the House Appropriations Committee, which determined how federal dollars would be spent. On that committee, he steered funds towards housing and urban development, job placement and health



Julian Bond



Louis Stokes

clinics, overseeing appropriations for \$90 billion dollars. He sponsored legislation in Congress to establish the Office of Minority Health as a federal agency, and was an early advocate on federal intervention in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Congressman Stokes retired in 1998, but continued to practice law until his death at the age of 90 this summer.

US Department of HUD Announces New Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 includes two goals: to eliminate housing discrimination, and to promote residential integration. Fair housing groups across the country have been relentless in fighting housing discrimination, yet achieving full residential integration remains a challenge. In an effort to address housing disparity, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

(HUD) has taken a major step. In July, HUD announced a new rule to help communities meet their obligation to promote residential integration, or Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). The AFFH rule provides clarity and technical assistance to HUD funding recipients to assess the state of fair housing in their communities, and set locally determined goals and priorities. The rule means replacing the

existing Analysis of Impediments with the new Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH). HUD will provide the AFH template and data that jurisdictions will use to complete the assessment. Implementation of the AFFH rule will not be immediate, rather it will coincide with the grantee's funding cycle. The Housing Center is available for assistance with understanding and compliance with this new requirement.

Fair Housing Advancement

Housing Center Presents at HOME Cincinnati Education Conference

The Housing Research & Advocacy Center was honored to participate in the Region V Education & Outreach Roundtable Conference hosted by Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) Cincinnati. Director of Education & Outreach Darlene English served on the planning committee, as well as presented on one and moderated two panel discussions. The conference aimed to empower Education and Outreach staff of regional FHIP (fair housing initiatives program) and FHAP (fair housing assistance program) agencies to learn better ways to communicate the message that fair housing laws improve neighborhoods. Panel discussions focused on the use of social media, creative education and outreach activities, specialty fair housing classes and working in schools, among others. Executive Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, Michael Payton gave the keynote address, *The Role of FHAPs in Education and Outreach*.

He spoke on the importance of collaboration between fair housing groups, the Department of Justice, local law associations, and others, in order to recognize discrimination and root it out.

Roxanne Vierra, Fair Housing Specialist and Disability Compliance Specialist with King County Office of Civil Rights, taught a number of innovative ways to conduct disability-focused fair housing trainings, incorporating games and engaging activities.

Darlene English highlighted specialty classes for students and refugees, as well as awareness raising activities such as the Youth Art Exhibition, the Opening Doors Through the Art of Storytelling Photography Exhibition, the Rock the Block 5k, and the Brush Strokes for Equality Mural.

The Education & Outreach Roundtable Conference was attended by participants from across the country.



Housing Center Director of Education & Outreach, Darlene English



Housing Center Fair Housing Community Educator Doris Honsa discusses her table's outreach activities



Panelists: Darlene English, Karl Zimmerman & Roxanne Vierra

Westfield Grant Expands Housing Center Outreach

The Housing Center completed outreach work for the *Know Your Fair Housing Rights: Consumer Education Initiative* funded by the Westfield Insurance Foundation. This project focused on educating low-to-moderate income consumers and community organizations that serve vulnerable populations in Cuyahoga and Lorain Counties.

Educating renters and homebuyers of their fair housing rights empowers them with the ability to recognize when those rights have been violated and how to protect themselves and their right to equal access to the housing of their choice. The Housing Center thanks the Westfield Insurance Foundation for helping expand our outreach!



South Euclid Amends Fair Housing Ordinance

The South Euclid City Council voted in October to amend its fair housing ordinance to expand protections to more individuals and create a more welcoming climate. The Council voted to add sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, ethnic group,

military status, and source of income as protected classes. This move makes South Euclid's Fair Housing Ordinance one of the most comprehensive in Northeast Ohio. The Housing Center is fortunate to have the opportunity to provide Affirmatively Furthering

Fair Housing (AFFH) technical assistance to urban county communities, such as fair housing ordinance review, through a contract with Cuyahoga County Department of Development in Cuyahoga County.

Housing Research & Advocacy Center

2728 Euclid Avenue, Suite 200
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
Phone: (216) 361-9240
Fax: (216) 426-1290
www.thehousingcenter.org

Board of Directors:

CARLETON MOORE!, President
Jonathan L. Entin, Vice President
Harold Williams, Secretary
Jacqueline Jackson, Treasurer
Andrea Bruno
Linda Graves
Phyllis Harris
Brian Mikelbank
Priscilla Pointer-Hicks
Dr. Reverend Crystal Walker
Swaroop Yalla
Isam Zaierm

Directors Emeriti:

Patricia Burgess (deceased)
Gay Quereau

Staff:

Carrie Pleasants, Interim Director
Darlene English, Director of Education & Outreach
Doris Honsa, Fair Housing Community Educator
Kris Keniray, Director of Enforcement
Michael Lepley, Senior Research Associate
Tadd Pinkston, Fair Housing Intern
Laura Swiney, Investigations Coordinator
Joli Ford, Community Workstudy Student

Mission:

We promote fair housing and diverse communities, and work to eliminate housing discrimination in Northeast Ohio by providing effective research, education, and advocacy.

Values:

Equality, Respect, Honesty, Attention, Acceptance, Commitment, Dedication, Knowledge, and Understanding

Housing Center Staff Updates

The Housing Center experienced some staff transitions this summer. Executive Director Hilary King left the agency. The organization appreciated her dedication to fair housing. Carrie Pleasants has been named Interim Director, while the Board of Directors conducts a search for a new Executive Director. Carrie Pleasants has been with the Housing Center since 2000 and the Associate Director for the last six years. Prior to her promotion, Carrie was the Director of Research & Investigations. She has been involved in all aspects of the agency including authoring reports, grantwriting, assisting with events, hiring and supervising staff and overseeing research, complaint and testing operations.

Michael Lepley has been promoted to Senior Research Associate. Michael served as Research Associate for two years and co-authored *The State of Fair Housing in Northeast Ohio 2015*, *The Euclid Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*, *Ashtabula Rental Factbook*, and the *Cuyahoga County Rental Factbook*. Mandy Mehlman, who previously held the Senior Research position, was hired by Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority as its 504 Housing Coordinator. We congratulate Michael on his promotion, and wish Mandy much success in her new endeavor!

Welcome Tadd Pinkston

The Housing Center welcomed R. Tadd Pinkston as the Fair Housing Intern in July, to work with the enforcement department. Tadd handles intakes of fair housing complaints, as well as demographic research. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of Wooster, where he majored in history and political science. While at Wooster, Tadd wrote his senior thesis on race and Cherokee constitutional law. Tadd received the distinction of honors on his thesis. He is currently a third-year law student at Case Western University School of Law and hopes to receive his Juris Doctorate with a concentration in litigation and international law. Prior to joining the Housing Center, Tadd served as a law clerk to Judge Montgomery at the Shaker Heights Municipal Court.



Welcome Joli Ford

The Housing Center is pleased to be a participating partner in the Community Work Study Program sponsored by Saint Martin De Porres High School. The program requires students beginning in ninth grade to be placed in a job one day a week in order to build relationships and gain experience that will prepare them for success in college and life. We welcomed Joli Ford to the Housing Center in September. Through the program, Joli will assist the agency in routing phone calls to the appropriate departments, and other administrative office duties, such as filing, preparing training packets, and helping with inventory.



Saint Martin De Porres High School is a Catholic co-educational high school and a member of the Cristo Rey Network. The school provides an innovative college-preparatory curriculum rooted in the development of habits of mind and spirit. Through the rigorous academic work and community work study, students grow in their faith journey and deepen their commitment to social justice, leaving high school prepared for success.



2728 Euclid Avenue, Suite 200
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
Phone: (216) 361-9240
Fax: (216) 426-1290
Fair Housing Hotline: (216) 361-9861
www.thehousingcenter.org

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #857
Cleveland, OH

ATTENTION!!

Soon, the Housing Center will transition to a **digital newsletter only**. Please reaffirm your subscription to *Connect!* newsletter by signing up via our website, www.thehousingcenter.org.

Printed editions will be available by request only.



GCC/BT 1216-M
Kondik Advertising & Printing, Inc.

UPCOMING FAIR HOUSING EVENTS

Fair Housing & Landlord Tenant Law

Thursday, November 12, 2015

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Euclid Library

222nd Street, Euclid, Ohio 44130

To register, contact Doris Honsa, 216-361-9240 or dhonsa@thehousingcenter.org

1.5 FREE CEUs for Real Estate Professionals

Fair Housing & Landlord Tenant Law

TBD 2015

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Bedford Heights City Hall

Bedford Heights, OH 44146

For information, contact Doris Honsa, 216-361-9240 or dhonsa@thehousingcenter.org

1.5 FREE CEUs for Real Estate Professionals

Fair Housing & Landlord Tenant Law

TBD 2015

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Notre Dame College

South Euclid, OH 44121

For information, contact Doris Honsa, 216-361-9240 or dhonsa@thehousingcenter.org

1.5 FREE CEUs for Real Estate Professionals

Fair Housing & Landlord Tenant Law

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Brook Park City Hall

6161 Engle Road, Brook Park, Ohio 44142

To register, contact Doris Honsa, 216-361-9240 or dhonsa@thehousingcenter.org

1.5 FREE CEUs for Real Estate Professionals