City of Philadelphia
Commission on Human Relations
and
Fair Housing Commission

2007 Annual Report

Philadelphia Commission on
Human Relations

Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
James S. Allen, Sr., Chairperson

Visit us on-line at:
www.phila.gov/humanrelations

PHILADELPHIA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS AND PHILADELPHIA FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION

THE CURTIS CENTER
601 WALNUT STREET, SUITE 300 SOUTH
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106
MAIN PHONE: 215-686-4670
TTY: 215-686-3238

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

THE PHILADELPHIA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS (PCHR) IS THE AGENCY OF CITY GOVERNMENT THAT ENFORCES CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND DEALS WITH ALL MATTERS OF INTER-GROUP CONFLICT AND NEIGHBORHOOD DISPUTES WITHIN THE CITY. COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION ARE INVESTIGATED BY THE PCHR IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, USE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS AND THE DELIVERY OF CITY SERVICES BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, DISABILITY, RELIGION, OR RETALIATION. ADDITIONAL BASES IN HOUSING ARE THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN AND SOURCE OF INCOME. IN ADDITION, THE PCHR Is RESPONSIBLE FOR RECEIVING AND REVIEWING APPLICATIONS FROM SAME-SEX COUPLES WHO WISH TO REGISTER THEIR LIFE PARTNERSHIP, AND PROVIDE STAFF FOR THE PHILADELPHIA FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION (PFHC).

THE PHILADELPHIA FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION

THE PHILADELPHIA FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION (PFHC) ADDRESSES UNFAIR RENTAL PRACTICES IN THE CITY. A TENANT MAY FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE PFHC IF RENT IS CURRENT AND THE TENANT IS BEING THREATENED WITH ILLEGAL EVICTION, IF A LANDLORD IS RAISING RENT IN THE FACE OF HOUSING CODE VIOLATIONS, IF ANOTHER TERM OF A LEASE IS BEING VIOLATED, OR TO STOP A LANDLORD FROM RETALIATING AGAINST A TENANT FOR REPORTING HOUSING CODE VIOLATIONS TO THE PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS (L & I).

Table of Contents

Message from the Executive Director 2
Commissioners and Staff 2
Forward 3
Mission 3
Central Intake Unit 4
Central Intake Services..... 4
Registration of Life Partners 4
Life Partnership Registrations..... 5
The Compliance Division 5
Complaints Docketed and Resolved 5
Complaint Highlights 6
Complaints Docketed by Basis 6
Complaints Resolved by Basis 6
Compliance Complaint Highlights..... 7
Legislation..... 11
Public Hearing..... 14
The Community Relations Division 15
The Dispute Resolution Program..... 15
CRD Human Relations Representatives..... 16
CRD Service Levels 18
CRD Compliant Highlights 18
Honors and Awards..... 23
Prayer Vigil for a Restored Civility..... 24
Annual Human Rights Awards Luncheon Honors 16 Community Activists..... 25
The Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission 27
Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission 2007 Service Report..... .28
Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission Complaint Highlights..... 28
Operating Budget: Fiscal Years 2006-2008..... 30
History..... 30

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
The Curtis Center,
601 Walnut Street, Suite 300 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Telephone (215) 686-4670
Fax # (215) 686-4684

REV. JAMES S. ALLEN, SR.
Chairperson

W. NICK TALIAFERRO
Executive Director

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking a moment to review and consider the activities and efforts of the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission and the Fair Housing Commission. For over five decades this agency has kept faith with the citizens of our city by maintaining a vigilant watch over the Civil and Human Rights of individuals – whether in the workplace or marketplace – and we remain resolved to carry out our mandate.

Over the last 18 months it has been my privilege to work with the dedicated professionals that comprise our team. We are not the largest agency in the city, but nowhere have I found a more dedicated staff; the compassion, conviction, and experience of our team is unrivaled. Not a day has gone by that I have not felt benefited by serving with them, and I am grateful that providence has allowed my path to be merged with theirs.

But most important is the work that has been accomplished on behalf of people like you. From the mediation work that helps to bring neighbors closer together, to the investigative work that seeks to bring justice to those who have felt the sting of unfair treatment, this agency has worked for YOU! We recognize that we are not simply bureaucrats and administrators; we are agents of healing and justice who have been entrusted with the task of righting wrongs and speaking truth to power. We regard that as a sacred trust, and we seek to carry it out with honor.

As we look into the future it is our intention to become a more proactive resource for the building of coalitions and the dismantling of inequity and bigotry. Ultimately, the first and finest work of any society is the establishing of a just and humane environment in which to live and learn and love. Everything else falls under the category of mere protocol.

Sincerely Yours,

Nick

Nick Taliaferro

The City of Philadelphia
Commission on Human Relations
Fair Housing Commission
The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street, Suite 300 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: 215-686-4670
TTY: 215-686-3238
Fax: 215-686-4684

Michael A. Nutter
Mayor

Rev. James S. Allen, Sr.
Chairperson
Commission on Human Relations

Rev. Ralph E. Blanks
Chairperson
Fair Housing Commission

W. Nick Taliaferro
Executive Director

Commissioners

Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations: Rev. James S. Allen, Sr.; Burt Siegel, *Vice Chairperson*; Crystal Barnett; Joseph J. Centeno, Esq.; Roxanne Covington, Esq.; Rabbi Alan Fuchs; Micah Mahjoubian, Juan Ortiz, Jr.

Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission: Rev. Ralph E. Blanks, Diane Canty, Anthony Lewis Jr., Severino Verna, Jr.

Staff

Administration: Angela DeShields, *Supervisor*, Liz Bunkowski, Jack Fingerman, Barry Williams

Central Intake Unit: Sophia Geyfetsman, Brenda Madera

PCHR Compliance Division: Rachel Lawton, *Deputy Director*, Joseph Farley, *Supervisor*, Wilma Holmes, *Supervisor*, Denise Benrahou, Bernard Bivens, Rosemary Branigan, Carolyn Collins, Matthew Cowell, Clarissa Larke, Deborah Rudbarg, Sheena Thomas-Austin, Michele White-Cooke

PCHR Community Relations Division: Ernest Greenwood, *Deputy Director*, John McNeil, *Supervisor*; Wutha Chin, Patricia Coyne, Shawna Holts, Nancy Rivera, Joseph Range, Jonah Roll, Veronica Szymanski

Fair Housing Commission: Paulette Banks, *Supervisor*; San Chin, Vivian Gray, Rhonda Kitchen

The PCHR also has a North Philadelphia Field Office that is located at 601 W. Lehigh Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19133. The telephone number of this office is 215-685-9761 and the fax number is 215-686-9768.

Forward

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) and the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission (PFHC) may be reached by calling 215-686-4670. Facsimiles may be sent to 215-686-4684 or 215-686-3239. The agency's TTY number is 215-686-3238 and mailing address is The Curtis Center, 601 Walnut Street, Suite 300 South, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Visit our new web site at http:/www.phila.gov/humanrelations. We would like to thank residents, the business community, government agencies, and partners for their continuing support.

Mission

Established in 1951 under the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations is the official municipal agency that enforces civil rights laws and deals with all matters of inter-group conflict and neighborhood disputes. The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, at full compliment, consists of nine commissioners, an executive director and a staff of professional investigators and mediators.

The Compliance Division of the PCHR enforces the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance (PFPO). The Ordinance prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, and use of public accommodations. Executive Order 1-87 prohibits discrimination in the provision of city services. It is illegal to discriminate in employment and housing on the bases of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age (40 and over in employment), sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or marital status. Additional bases in housing are the presence of children and source of income. Any age and physical disability (mental disability not covered) are bases of discrimination that are also covered in housing.

As for public accommodations and the delivery of city services, the bases for illegal discrimination are the same as in employment; with the exception that age is not covered in public accommodations. It is also illegal to retaliate against someone who has filed a discrimination complaint (except a public accommodation complaint) or has been a witness in a case. The PCHR is also responsible for receiving and reviewing applications from same-sex couples that wish to register their domestic partnership. Upon approval of their application, same-sex couples may request an optional *Certificate of Life Partnership*.

The PCHR Community Relations Division (CRD) services deal with all matters of inter-group conflict and neighborhood disputes within the boundaries of Philadelphia.

In addition, the PCHR provides staff for the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission. The PFHC addresses unfair rental practices in the City. At full compliment, the PFHC consists of five commissioners. The executive director of the PCHR also serves as the executive director of the PFHC. A complaint may be filed with the PFHC if a landlord is threatening to increase rent or evict a tenant from a dwelling that contains housing code violations. A complaint may also be filed if another term of a lease is being violated or to stop a landlord from retaliating against a tenant for reporting housing code violations to the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections (L & I).

Staff members are available who are fluent in Cambodian, Chinese, English, Russian, and Spanish.

Central Intake Unit

The Central Intake Unit interviews clients for both the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) and the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission (PFHC). The intake interview is a detailed and confidential process that is designed to determine if a client has a jurisdictional complaint that could be addressed by either the PCHR or the PFHC. If a concern is not within the jurisdiction of either the PCHR or the PFHC, the client will be referred to the appropriate agency.

Central Intake Services

Telephone Interviews	Number
Fair Housing ……..	901
General Inquiries/Referrals……..	564
Compliance……	816
Community Relations……	490
Total……..	2,771

Office Interviews	
Fair Housing……	316
General Inquiries/Referrals……..	472
Compliance……	338
Community Relations……	212
Total……..	1,338

Written Inquiries on Services……	192
Center City Intakes……	910

Registration of Life Partners

Since the enactment of life partnership legislation in Philadelphia on May 19, 1998, the PCHR has been responsible for registering same-sex couples. Since 1998, 529 same-sex couples have registered their relationship with the PCHR. The life partnership legislation:

- Amended the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance to include a definition of *Life Partnership* as being a long-term committed relationship between two unmarried individuals of the same gender. In addition, the amendment prohibits discrimination based on marital status in employment, housing, and the use of public accommodations.

- *Life Partners* of City employees became eligible for benefits under the City's various employee benefit plans.

- *A*llowed members of the Municipal Retirement System to name as beneficiaries and survivors any person designated by the employee, which could include one's *Life Partner*.

Life Partnership Registrations

Year	
1998	68
1999	84
2000	52
2001	55
2002	52
2003	46
2004	58
2005	40
2006	44
2007	30
Total	529

The Compliance Division

The Compliance Division of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) enforce civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and the delivery of City services.

It is illegal to discriminate in employment and housing on the bases of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age (40 and over in employment), sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or marital status. Additional bases in housing are the presence of children and source of income. Any age and physical disability (mental disability not covered) are bases of discrimination that are also covered in housing.

As for public accommodations and the delivery of city services, the bases for illegal discrimination are the same as in employment, with the exception that age and retaliation are not covered in public accommodations. It is also illegal to retaliate against someone who has filed a discrimination complaint with PCHR or has been a witness in a case.

Complaints Docketed and Resolved

The Compliance Division docketed 243 complaints, resolved 336 complaints and recovered $385,847.10 in damages for 56 complainants in 2007. The complaints were in the following areas.

Area	Docketed	Resolved
Employment	219	293
Housing	8	22
Public Accommodations	15	20
City Services	1	1
Total	243	336

Complaints Docketed by Basis

Basis	Employment	Housing	Public Accommodations	City Services
Race/Color	77	2	6	0
Religion	13	0	3	0
National Origin/Ancestry	25	1	1	0
Sex (Gender)	50	0	1	0
Sexual Harassment	24	1	0	0
Sexual Orientation	19	1	1	1
Gender Identity	1	0	1	0
Disability	30	3	6	0
Age	39	0	Not Covered	0
Marital Status	1	0	0	0
Retaliation	60	1	Not Covered	0
Source of Income	Not Covered	3	Not Covered	0
Presence of Children	Not Covered	1	Not Covered	0
Other	0	1	0	0

Note: The number of protected class bases docketed exceeded the total number of complaints. This is because more than a single basis and more than one type of discriminatory act may have been part of a single complaint.

Complaints Resolved by Basis

Basis	Employment	Housing	Public Accommodations	City Services
Race	141	4	9	1
Color	134	4	9	1
Religion	23	0	0	0
National Origin	34	4	2	0
Ancestry	35	4	1	0
Sex (Gender)	75	1	1	0
Sexual Harassment	37	3	0	0
Sexual Orientation	54	3	2	0
Gender Identity	1	0	1	0
Disability	54	2	1	0
Age	44	0	Not Covered	0
Marital Status	2	0	0	0
Retaliation	98	1	1	0
Source of Income	Not Covered	3	Not Covered	Not Covered
Presence of Children	Not Covered	2	Not Covered	Not Covered

Note: The number of protected class bases docketed exceeded the total number of complaints. This is because more than a single basis and more than one type of discriminatory act may have been part of a single complaint.

Compliance Complaint Highlights

A disabled Complainant alleged that his employer retaliated against him with regard to terms, conditions and privileges of employment, including but not limited to accusing him of stealing, and after telling a manager that he called EEOC reporting discrimination, he was subsequently terminated all because of his disability and/or perceived disability and/or retaliation. The clothing store denied discriminating against the Complainant. After a Fact Finding Conference and prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent agreed to pay, and the Complainant accepted $11,000 to settle the charge.

*

A black Muslim Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by denying her a promotion and demoting her after she came to work wearing her head cover, then offering the promotion to a white male employee and subsequently terminating her all because of her race and/or color and/or sex and/or religion. The Respondent did not submit a written response to the complaint. After service of the charge, the parties mutually agreed to enter into settlement discussions. The Respondent agreed to pay, and the Complainant accepted $12,000 to settle the compliant.

*

A Puerto Rican Complainant who was born in 1942 alleged that his employer discriminated against him by allowing a white non-Hispanic Acting Branch Manager to make demeaning and derogatory racial remarks to him and subsequently wrongfully terminating him, all because of his age and/or National Origin/Ancestry. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant for any reason. Prior to finalizing the investigation, the Complainant and the Respondent entered into settlement negotiations whereby a settlement was reached. The Respondent agreed to pay, and the Complainant accepted $10,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A disabled Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by denying him reasonable accommodations and terminating him, all because of his disability. The Complainant verified that after a series of medical tests, it was determined that he has sarcoidosis. He claimed that he is not limited in any life function and is able to work full-duty for the Respondent. He submitted a noted from his medical doctor requesting that he be moved to a less dusty part of the facility. The Respondent, at first, agreed to let the Complainant move to another department, but subsequently fired him. The Respondent claimed that its medical insurance company advised against the Complainant working in the facility in any capacity. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Subsequent to a Fact Finding Conference, the Respondent and the Complainant agreed to settle the complaint for a one-time payment of $7,500.

*

A disabled Complainant alleged that a Respondent discriminated against her and subjected her to harassment by increasing her workload, denying her a raise and subsequently terminating her, all because of her disability and/or retaliation. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. The Complainant admitted that she forgot to process some documents after receiving her Final Written Warning and had not properly making entries on her reports. During continued investigations, the Complainant and the Respondent entered into settlement negotiations. The Respondent agreed to pay, and the Complainant accepted 6 weeks salary in the amount of $3,625.25 to settle the complaint.

*

A male Complainant alleged that a Respondent discriminated against him by subjecting him to sexual harassment and, subsequently, terminating him, all because of his sex (sexual harassment) and/or because he objected to practices prohibited by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance (retaliation). The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent offered, and the Complainant accepted, $1,500 to settle the complaint.

A black Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by making offensive racial comments and subsequently terminating him, all because of his race and/or color. The Respondent denied discriminating against the

Complainant. After service of the charge, the parties mutually agreed to enter into settlement discussions and postponed holding a Fact Finding Conference. The Respondent subsequently agreed to rehire the Complainant as a Promotions Manager and pay the Complainant $400 a week plus 10% commissions ($20,000 projected).

*

A disabled Complainant alleged that a Respondent discriminated against her by terminating her all because of her disability. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Complainant and the Respondent reached a settlement agreement. The Respondent agreed to the following: 1) the Complainant's employment record will reflect that she voluntarily resigned her position, 2) a neutral job reference will be provided if any such inquiry is ever made to the Respondent concerning the Complainant's employment, 3) pay the Complainant $5,250, and 4) the Complainant agrees to not apply in the future for employment or re-employment by the Respondent or any of the Respondent Affiliates.

*

A black Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by permitting a white manager to subject him to a hostile work environment and subsequently terminating his employment after he complained of the discrimination, all because of his race and/or color and/or age and/or retaliation for complaining of discrimination. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent terminated the manager whom the Complainant alleged made racial epitaphs to him and rehired the Complainant to his former position ($24,400 projected), with seniority. In addition, the Respondent agreed to pay the Complainant, $8,500 to settle the complaint.

*

A black male Complainant who was born in 1943 alleged that his employer discriminated against him by failing to rehire him while rehiring a younger white female employee who committed the same offense, all on the bases of race and/or color and/or sex (gender) and/or age. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to a scheduled Fact Finding Conference, the Complainant and the Respondent entered into Pre-Determination Settlement discussions. To settle the complaint, the Respondent agreed to return the Complainant to his former position and to pay him a yearly salary of $12,000, in exchange for the withdrawal of the charge.

*

A black Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by terminating him because he worked previously for a similar vendor, while not terminating s similarly situated Asian Indian employee who had worked for the same vendor, all because of his race and/or color. The Respondent stated that contract stipulations prevent some of its former employees from working for a similar company for at least one year after that employee has separated from some of its units. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Before the conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent agreed to re-hire ($27,000 projected) the Complainant in exchange for the withdrawal of the complaint.

*

A black female Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by creating a hostile work environment, making racially inappropriate comments by white employees, and harassing her after she complained about it, and subsequently terminating her, all because of her race and/or color and because she opposed practices forbidden by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance (retaliation). The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to a Fact Finding Conference and conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent agreed to reinstate the Complainant to her previous position $35,797) with no break in service with all benefits reinstated to the same level as before the Complainant's termination.

*

A disabled female Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by terminating her on the bases of sex (gender) and/or disability and/or perceived disability. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. The Respondent stated that the Complainant was discharged for performance deficiencies, including blatant insubordination. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Respondent provided the Complainant with $12,000 to settle the complaint.
A black Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by treating her differently than a similarly situated white employee by reducing her hours, refusing to consider her for other positions, and subsequently terminating her

employment, while not doing so to a similarly situated white employee, all because of her race and/or color. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to conducting a Fact Finding Conference, the Complainant agreed to accept the Respondent's offer of $16,500, in exchange for withdrawing the charge.

*

A black Nigerian Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by making inappropriate racial remarks, denying pay for his overtime, demoting him and subsequently terminating him, all because of his race and/or color and/or national origin and/or ancestry and/or retaliation. The complaint was assigned and docketed. Prior to serving the charge, the Respondent agreed to pay the Complainant $6,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A black female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated her by subjecting her to sexual harassment and subsequently terminating her, all because of her race and/or color and/or sex and/or retaliation. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. During the continued investigation, the Respondent agreed to pay the Complainant $5,000 and the Complainant accepted the offer to settle the complaint.

*

A female Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by subjecting her to a hostile work environment by allowing male employees to make inappropriate derogatory remarks, all because of her sex and sexual harassment. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant or that she was sexually harassed. Prior to the investigation, the Respondent offered the Complainant $25,000 and the Complainant accepted the offer to settle the complaint.

*

A black disabled Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by harassing and disciplining her, and subsequently terminating her she was while out on medical leave, all because of her race and/or color and/or disability and/or perceived disability. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Complainant and the Respondent reached a mutually satisfactory settlement through her union in which the Respondent agreed to reinstate the Complainant to her former position and pay her $21,646 in back pay.

*

A female (pregnant) Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by retaliating against her after she complained of being sexually harassed by a server, in that she was subsequently terminated, on the basis of sex (sex harassment) and/or retaliation. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. After service of the charge, the parties mutually agreed to enter into settlement discussions and postponed holding a Fact Finding Conference. The Respondent subsequently agreed to pay the Complainant $5,500 to settle the complaint.

*

A black Complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by making derogatory remarks about his marriage to a white woman and, subsequently, terminating his employment without severance pay, while other terminated employees received severance pay, all because of his race and/or color. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the completion of the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent came to an agreement in which the Respondent would pay the Complainant a six week severance of $9,807.70 gross which included payment for all attorney's fees and costs incurred.

*

A West Indian Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by denying her a pay raise and disciplining her, all because of her race and/or color and/or national origin and/or ancestry. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent made a settlement agreement in which the Respondent will give the Complainant a neutral reference, allowed her to resign her position (with ineligibility for rehire) and pay the sum of $4,764.38, less taxes.

A disabled Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by failing to provide her with a reasonable accommodation, and then subsequently terminating her when she was medically cleared to return to work, all on the basis of disability and/or perceived disability. After having surgery, the Complainant needed to avoid steps. The Complainant

requested that she be assigned to work on the first floor as a medical accommodation. The Respondent refused to accommodate her and insisted that she would have to walk up and down steps between the first and second floors as needed. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. The Respondent stated that it terminated the Complainant after discovering billing deficiencies. During a Fact Finding Conference, the Complainant and the Respondent agreed to settle the matter for $3,500.

*

A female Complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by allowing a male employee to sexually harass her and requesting that she be reassigned after she reported the harassment, all because of her sex (sexual harassment) and/or in retaliation for opposing the sexual harassment. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. Prior to a Fact Finding Conference, the Complainant and the Respondent agreed to settle the complaint for $1,000.

*

An African American Complainant alleged that she was discriminated against when her employer suspended her and subsequently terminating her while not suspending and terminating a similarly situated non-black Hispanic employee for a similar infraction, all because of her national origin and/or ancestry. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. After service of the charge, the parties mutually agreed to enter into settlement discussions and postponed holding a Fact Finding Conference. The Respondent subsequently agreed to pay the Complainant $4,000 and provide the Complainant with a neutral letter of reference.

*

A disabled Complainant, born in 1948, alleged that his employer discriminated against him by yelling at him and subjecting him to harassment, which created for him a hostile work environment and subsequently terminating him, all because of his disability and/or age. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. The Respondent stated that it did provide the Complainant with reasonable accommodations so that he would be effective in his position. However, the Complainant had performance issues, for which he received written discipline. The Complainant was given more latitude in terms of the amount of time he was allowed to correct his performance deficiencies. Because he was unable to correct his performance issues, the Complainant was terminated from his position. A Fact Finding Conference was held and prior to making a determination, the Respondent agreed to pay, and the Complainant accepted, $4,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A disabled Complainant, who is in a wheelchair, alleged that a restaurant discriminated against her by failing to have a wheelchair accessible entrance and posted signs instructing the disabled as to how they could obtain assistance with entry and service, thereby denying service to the Complainant and/or discouraging his patronage, all because of his disability. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. The Complainant stated that in a previous visit the Respondent assisted him by lifting him in his motorized wheelchair into the building. He stated that he was uncomfortable with this procedure. Staff advised the Respondent that its current practice was not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In response, the Respondent had a portable ramp designed and constructed. Staff inspected the ramp and communicated a description of it to the Complainant. The Complainant suggested that the Respondent add a curb or rail to the ramp. The Respondent did so, and, at the Complainant's request, Staff tested the ramp on a wheelchair. The Respondent quickly moved the ramp into place and courteously assisted Staff into the Respondent. Staff could freely navigate into the dining area. The Complainant was satisfied with the results of this test and signed a withdrawal of the complaint.

*

A disabled Complainant alleged that that his employer discriminated against him by accusing him of stealing, and after telling a manager that he called EEOC reporting discrimination, he was subsequently terminated all because of his disability and/or perceived disability and/or retaliation. The Respondent denied discriminating against the Complainant. After a Fact Finding Conference, the Respondent offered, and the Complainant accepted, $11,000 to settle the complaint.

Legislation

Staff members of PCHR are often called to testify before committees of legislative bodies regarding proposed bills or legislation that may affect the civil rights or civil liberties of the community. Two such committees involved the House State Government Committee of Pennsylvania and the Committee of Licenses and Inspections, the City Council of Philadelphia.

The hearing, convened by Representative Babette Josephs, Majority Chair of the House State Government Committee, was held on November 15, 2007 on legislation introduced on June 18, 2007 that would protect people who live or work in Pennsylvania from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression in employment, housing or public accommodations. The committee heard testimony on House Bill 1400 from a number of community groups' agencies, including the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Pennsylvania Bar Association, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, Equality Advocates of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations.

Pittsburgh, Erie County and Philadelphia are among 14 Pennsylvania communities that ban anti-gay discrimination, but about three-fourths of the state's more than 12 million residents live in communities that do not provide such protection. Nationwide, 20 states – including neighboring Maryland, New Jersey and New York – already have laws in effect or due to take effect that ban job discrimination based on sexual orientation. Twelve states, including New Jersey, have laws banning job discrimination based on gender identity. The following testimony in support of HB 1400 was offered by the PCHR.

TESTIMONY GIVEN BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PENNSYLVANIA HUMAN RELATIONS ACT TO PROVIDE PROTECTION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION

By Rachel S. Lawton, Deputy Director
Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations
Thursday, November 15, 2007

Good afternoon. My name is Rachel Lawton. I am the Deputy Director of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations. I would like to thank Representative Babette Josephs, Majority Chair of the House State Government Committee, for holding this hearing today. It is my pleasure to testify on behalf of the City of Philadelphia's official civil rights agency concerning our 25-year history of providing civil rights protection for individuals based on sexual orientation and our 5-year history of providing protection based on gender identity.

Rachel S. Lawton, Deputy Director, second on right, testifies before the House State Government Comm. on House Bill 1400. (Photo Credit: PA House of Rep.)

The Commission on Human Relations was established in 1951 and Philadelphia became the first city in the United States to have in its basic charter a provision for an official civil rights agency.

Over the years it became illegal to discriminate in employment, housing and public accommodations on the bases of race, color, sex, religion national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation and gender identity. Additional bases in housing are source of income and presence of children. It was in 1982 that sexual orientation was added to the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance and 2002 that gender identity was added.

In Philadelphia, all citizens are assured that they can fully and equally participate in the social, economic, and recreational life of the city. It is a known fact that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities have been victims of harassment and hate crimes. Just as people continue to be discriminated against on account of their race, religion, national origin, etc. despite legal recourse, the LGBT communities continue to suffer discrimination. Amending a law to include protection will not eliminate discrimination, but it WILL give victims a course of action to pursue a remedy and justice from discriminatory treatment. And amending a law to include protection WILL act as a deterrent to many in Pennsylvania who, to date, have known that there is no penalty for denying a job or a home to someone simply because of their sexual orientation on the state or federal level. It is really unbelievable that in this day and age the most qualified candidate for a job can be turned down or an applicant with the best rental history and credit rating can be denied housing simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity right outside of Philadelphia while a few blocks away, within the city limits, the same treatment would be illegal.

With a 25-year history of sexual orientation protection in Philadelphia we can conclusively say that adding this protection and the subsequent gender identity provision 5 years ago have not had a significant financial cost to the city and the agency. It has had, however, a dramatic impact with regard to deterring LGBT discrimination and instilling among many Philadelphia employers the need to include LGBT issues and rights in their general EEO training programs for their employees.

A look at Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations statistics for the last five years with regard to how many LGBT cases have been filed compared to overall filings will demonstrate the above point.

In 2002, 384 employment discrimination cases were filed and of those 22 had sexual orientation as a basis and there were no gender identity cases filed. In 2003, 323 employment cases were filed with 11 having sexual orientation as a basis and no gender identity cases were filed. In 2004, 328 cases were filed and of those 19 had sexual orientation as a basis and one gender identity case was filed. In 2005, 375 cases were filed with 11 of them having sexual orientation as a basis and 1 gender identity case was filed. In 2006, 256 cases were filed and of those 14 had sexual orientation as a basis and 3 had gender identity as a basis.

These statistics validate that the LGBT communities are pursuing their civil rights in Philadelphia and this has not been a financial burden to the city. However, the very low number of gender identity cases also is an indication that there is much work to be done with education and outreach. People who are reluctant to come forward due to fear and a history of discriminatory treatment need to know about the law and the recourse they have to illegal treatment.

In closing, I would simply like to encourage you at the State level to not wait any longer to amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to include protection for LGBT communities. It is long overdue. Deserving hard working gay, lesbian and transgender individuals deserve the same right to earn a living and live in a home as any one else. Please don't deny them that basic right any longer.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. If you have any questions, I would be happy to answer them.

As of this writing, no further action has been taken and HB 1400 is pending in the House State Government Committee of PA.

The Committee of Licenses and Inspections of the City Council of Philadelphia held a hearing on December 5, 2007 on Bill No. 070914. The Bill, introduced on October 25, 2007 by Council Member Darrell L. Clarke, would amend Chapter 10-200 of The Philadelphia code, entitled "Ethnic Intimidation And Institutional Vandalism," by adding a section prohibiting the display of symbols of racial animus, under certain terms and conditions.

The amendment, would add the phrase *(2) No person shall display, with the intent to intimidate another person or to incite violence, a symbol of racial or ethnic animus, such as a noose, burning cross or swastika, in a place of employment, in a public accommodation, in a public facility, on public property or in the public right-of-way.*

Penalties of violation would also be amended to (1) The penalty for violation of this Chapter is a fine of three hundred (300) dollars, *except that a violation of subsection 10-202(2) is subject to the monetary fines established for a Class III offense and imprisonment of up to ninety (90) days.*

The following testimony in support of Bill #070914 before the Committee of Licenses and Inspections, the City Council of Philadelphia, was offered by the PCHR.

By Nick Taliaferro, Executive Director
Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations
December 5, 2007

To the esteemed members of the Committee of Licenses and Inspections of the City Council of the City of Philadelphia, my name is Nick Taliaferro and I serve as the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations.

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) stands in support of Bill #070914, as introduced by the Honorable Councilman Darrell Clarke. It is our sincere belief that Councilman Clarke's Bill will be a practical and meaningful addition to the Philadelphia City Code (the Code), and will enhance its capacity to deter those who, motivated by hate and bigotry; commit acts of violence and intimidation.

While some may be tempted to view this Bill as a simple attempt to increase the punitive power of the Code (in the face of rising acts of hate crimes), PCHR views the Councilman's Bill with deeper consideration. We perceive that Bill #070914 will actually raise the public consciousness of the true impact and power inherent in the use of symbols as tools of terror and anti-social destructiveness.

Far too often the use of hate symbols are viewed as anachronistic appendages to other criminal acts (e.g. desecration of burial sites, or defacing private property). It is assumed that the use and/or display of hate symbols are simply a reflection of narrow minds, vainly attempting to recall a bygone era when their bigotry was popular and well supported. As such, most of the attention is then directed towards the physical, and thereby more measurable, acts of violence or destruction.

However, the use of symbols, when used in connection with other acts of intimidation, may have a more long-lasting and detrimental effect in ways that don't readily appear. While by no means exhaustive, I list a few of these below.

1. *<u>The Use of Hate Symbols Potentially Expands the Perpetrator-Base</u>*
Because people tend to identify with symbols, they may also identify with actions perpetrated in connection with that symbol. Haters use symbols for self-identification and to form common bonds with other group members, hence what may have ordinarily been just an isolated event (e.g. defacing a lawn) may become a galvanizing act – when a symbol is involved.

2. *<u>Hate Symbols Increase the Terror Quotient</u>*
Although perpetrators of individuals' acts of vandalism or physical assault may be limited in reach and resource, by invoking the power of a hate symbol they effectively connect their act to other acts. The result is that a person who may be totally disconnected from one particular act may become re-traumatized if a hate symbol is used that was also used in a situation that did involve them! This effect may be exponential; the yield is virtual terrorism.

3. Hate Symbols Possess Enduring Existential Power
Because symbols instill beliefs and shape attitudes that underpin social structures," they tend to take on power separate from deeds committed under their auspice. Accordingly, although the acts may be superfluous or petty, once the hate symbol is invoked a greater power is introduced. The introduction of this greater power (of the symbol) may tend to exacerbate the true nature of agitation or conflict; what may have been simple relational drama may push toward a crisis – all due to the power of the hate symbol.

Passing this Bill will assist the public in understanding the true power and danger in the use of hate symbols. It will also deter the cavalier use of these hate symbols by individuals who, filled with fear and a sense of impotence, attempt to invoke the power invested in these hate symbols for their own purposes.

PCHR stands prepared to provide educational assistance and support as an adjunct tool to assist in the enforcement of the Code upon its being enhanced by the alteration represented in this Bill. On behalf of the collective workforce of PCHR, thank you for allowing us the privilege of lending our voice in support Bill #070914, and we urge the Committee to recommend it favorably to the entire Council.

Bill #070914 was passed by City Council on December 13, 2007 and signed into law by the Mayor on January 3, 2008.

Public Hearing

On December 14, 2007 at the Arch Street Meeting House, the PCHR convened a public hearing in a Commission initiated complaint, PCHR vs. Geno's Steaks. The charge, Docket Number N06061422, alleges that *"On or about to wit, 06/09/2006 prior thereto and continuing thereafter, in Philadelphia, Penn., the Respondent (s) discriminated with regards to the accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of its place of public accommodation, by, including but not limited to, posting signs reading "This is America. When ordering, speak English," thereby discouraging patronage by non-English speaking customers, all because of national origin and/or ancestry.*

Camille Z. Charles, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, right, testifies before a PCHR Hearing Panel. (Photo Credit: Frank Branigan, Dept. of Records.)

Such actions by the Respondent (s) constitute an unlawful Discriminatory practice and is in violation of the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance, Chapter 9-1105, Section 9-1105 (A) (1) (b) of The Philadelphia Code. The Hearing Panel consisted of PCHR Commissioners Joseph J. Centeno, Esquire, Roxanne E. Covington, Esquire, and Burt Siegel. As of this writing, a decision by the Hearing Panel is pending.

Training and Meeting

Compliance staff members attended the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission/Federal Employment Practice Agencies (EEOC/FEPA) training conference. The session provided an update on court decisions related to employment discrimination and EEOC policies. Training was also provided on the EEOC Integrated Mission System (IMS), employment discrimination laws, EEOC policies and investigative procedures. Staff addressed a meeting of the local branch of the National Association of African Americans in Human Resource (NAAAHR), discussing the PCHR investigative process and answering questions.

The Community Relations Division

The Community Relations Division (CRD) deals with all matters of inter-group conflict and neighborhood disputes within the city. Staff uses a variety of approaches to encourage people of all backgrounds to cooperatively coexist with one another irrespective of group identity. Clients are provided with assessment, conciliation and follow-up services during a crisis. A key function of the CRD is to provide schools, communities and government agencies with informational sessions and training programs on issues relating to cultural diversity and inter-group harmony.

A key function of the CRD is to help empower communities by building coalitions that would work together in solving common problems or concerns. This is achieved by working in cooperation with the police, business, community and religious leaders, and other government and private agencies.

Staff engages in educational and other activities that are designed to reduce and prevent inter-group tension. Issues are addressed before they rise to the level of inter-group conflict. Language capabilities of staff are Cambodian, Chinese, English, Russian, and Spanish.

The Dispute Resolution Program

The Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) focuses on providing mediation, conciliation, counseling, and referral services to neighbors and others who have ongoing conflict.

Disputes mediated by the DRP have not yet escalated to a violent level or are currently in the courts.

The program helps prevent the escalation of lesser neighborhood problems into full-scale tension events. Staff does not provide solutions to conflicts nor do they solve problems for people.

A variety of approaches are used to encourage people of all backgrounds to cooperatively coexist with each other irrespective of group identity. The goal of mediation is to provide disputants with skills that enable them to resolve the conflict themselves.

The DRP provides formal mediation sessions that is conducted by a trained and experienced mediator. The mediator helps the parties identify the nature of the conflict.

The mediator also develops a legally binding and confidential agreement that describes the parties' future relationship. Most of the DRP cases are referred to the PCHR by the District Attorney's Office, the police or the courts.

What The DRP Can Do:

- Help assess the nature of a dispute in a confidential setting and provide a client with skills that are necessary to solve a dispute on his or her own, if that is appropriate.
- Make contact with the parties involved in the dispute in an attempt to establish a line of communication.
- Act as go-between for as long as needed until all of the parties come to a working resolution.

The DRP cannot:

- Take sides.
- Force or compel.
- Act as a substitute for a court of law.
- Anything that may harm a person, including violating a person's confidentiality.

The DRP cannot help:

- Persons in the same household.
- Married or separated couples.
- Victims of serious crimes or property damage.
- Strangers who have a single incident and who are not likely to ever see each other again.
- Disputants who are already in court or whose dispute is in front of an administrative body, i.e. The Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The DRP services are offered to:

✓ Individuals, households and groups who have an ongoing relationship with each other.

✓ Usually neighbors, but can also be business people whose shops or stalls are near each other, coworkers, members of a church, fraternal organization, or members of a community group.

CRD Human Relations Representatives

The activities of the CRD Human Relations Representatives are informed by their background and experience, observations, and acquired knowledge, which is constantly being expanded, updated and revisited.

Principles:

Underlying the work of a Community Relations Division Human Relations Representatives is a philosophy that drives their prevention activities, consistent with the guiding principles of CRD. These principles, simply stated, direct CRD representatives to:

- take a proactive, field-based approach
- encourage community ownership of problem
- harness motivating energy of conflict
- utilize self-interest
- support community-based leadership
- build mutual trust
- level the playing field (empowerment vs. advocacy)
- network and build coalitions

Vision:

The goal of Community Relations Division Human Relations Representatives is to integrate their approach, distinguished by their experiences and skills, with the underlying principles of the Community Relations Division. To do so, a personal vision for their work has emerged, which they revisit annually to ensure that their activity is congruent with it:

The personal vision for Community Relations Representatives is to serve as a capacity-building catalyst towards mutually satisfactory resolution for individuals and groups impacted by interpersonal/inter-group conflict or tension, emphasizing personal responsibility, collaboration, resource utilization, and positive action.

Prevention/Education Activities:

In implementing the principles of CRD consistent with this personal vision, Community Relations Division Human Relations Representatives:

- Maintain an ongoing presence in the field through participation in community events, activities and meetings.

- Encourage and offer technical assistance to residents and groups to organize, develop good lines of communication with one another (networking, relationship and coalition building, etc.), identify, share, and utilize resources, and assist in the development of ongoing vehicles or processes to sustain this.

- Respond in a timely fashion and support timely community actions encouraging residents/groups to identify their issues and needs and develop strategies to satisfy them.

- Cultivate residents as potential leaders and provide access to technical support and opportunities to develop their leadership capacity.

- Interact with all parties sensitively and supportively and acknowledge all views; assist residents to understand and respect the divergent views, customs, and attitudes of others and to build relationships with them.

- Identify and assist in gaining access to advocacy, training, education, civil rights, law enforcement, and other supportive resources and opportunities that residents and/or communities might desire or require.

- Identify groups, agencies, residents and resources as appropriate that may serve as partners or provide assistance, support or resources for individuals/groups and

    - nurture ongoing professional relationships,
    - provide information about and access to them,
    - encourage collaborative, cooperative efforts.

CRD Service Levels

	Number
Dispute Resolution Program:	
Cases……..	295
Individual Contacts…….. ….	5,221
Meetings……..	372
Workshops……. …	8
Resource Requests…….. …	699
Inter-group Events:	
Incidents……. ..	65
Individual Contacts……. ..	1,157
Meetings…….	137
Workshops……. ..	0
Resource Requests……. ..	127
Prevention Activities:	
Cases…….	86
Individual Contacts…….. .	3,663
Meetings……..	176
Workshops……..	26
Resource Requests……. ..	2,291
Educational Activities	
Individual Contacts……. ..	1,154
Meetings…….. ..	34
Workshops…….. ..	13
Resource Requests……..	925
Participants at Educational Workshops…….	1,836
Technical Assistance Projects Begun…….	21
Resource Development Projects Begun…….	17
Number of Activities Monitored (events/protests/potential conflicts)…….	19
Formal Mediations…….	50
Informal Mediations……..	148
Center City Office Intakes…….	303
North Philadelphia Office Intakes…….	125
Professional Development Meetings/Workshops…….	13

CRD Complaint Highlights

Inter-group (ITG) and Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) Events

A black female Complainant indicated that she felt that a white male Respondent tried to drive her out of her home and alleged that he called her the “N” word. She felt that Respondent and other neighbors (white and black) were trying to make her out as the troublemaker to the police. Most recently, the Complainant alleged that the Respondent physically assaulted her. Staff counseled the Complainant who asked that the Respondent not be contacted until she could decide if she wanted to take this to court, rather than through the PCHR DRP process. The Complainant advised PCHR that she had pursued the case in the courts via the District Attorney's Private Criminal Complaint process. Staff advised the Complainant that she

has the right to file a housing discrimination complaint at PCHR and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) and provided her with contact information (phone numbers and addresses). Staff advised the Complainant that this is no longer jurisdictional and PCHR will close the case.

*

Staff mediated a case that involved two families and allegations of ethnic slurs (the "N" word) made by a Hispanic family. Staff counseled both families and discussed the situation with the 25th Police District (PD) Community Relations Officer (CRO). Staff brought all parties in for a successful mediation at the 25th PD. The conflict was about perceived slurs and lifestyles. The behavior of one child of one of the families, who has emotional problems, was discussed and the affected family agreed to address the situation. Both families and the community are mixed black/Hispanic and both families have been friends in the past. After a subsequent mediation session, either family has reported no further incidents of conflict and the mediated agreement stands.

*

The Police Department's Civil Affairs Unit referred to PCHR a case that involved a Palestinian family (Complainant) that is having an ongoing conflict with a neighboring Hispanic family (Respondent). The families and their children used to be friends, but conflict arose over one of the Complainant's children's bicycles. The children also attend school together. The Complainant cannot identify the Respondent by name. Staff met with the Complainant, his brother-in-law, and a translator at Al-Aqsa Mosque, along with the CRO of the 25th PD to see what services PCHR could provide. The family had a fire at their home that they alleged was set by the Respondent. To resolve the conflict in the classroom with the other students, PCHR staff referred the Complainant family to the school and to the PD for any further neighborhood crime issues. Staff also referred the Complainant family to various social/human service agencies for assistance in parenting, life skills, and housing/food issues. Staff monitored the case and did not find any indications of any ethnic or racial discrimination.

*

A Complainant (Middle Eastern Muslim male) was stopped for allegedly going through a red light. The Complainant stated that it took the police officer who ran his license/registration about 45 minutes to do so and that when the officer returned to present him with a ticket, the officer told him he was doing so because of "911," and spoke abusively to him. Al-Aqsa Mosque (Nabil) and the Complainant requested the assistance of PCHR. Staff spoke to the Complainant and advised him of his right to file police complaints with PD Internal Affairs and the Police Advisory Commission. Staff also advised him of the PCHR dispute resolution process and the Complainant agreed to try that first. Staff contacted the 26th PD Captain. The Captain stated he met with the officer, who said that they guy ran a red light and, when he ran the license, he found the Complainant was on one of the federal government lists. Because it took such a long time, when the officer went back to the car, by way of apology and explanation, he told the Complainant that, because of 911, the fed's have targeted certain names for scrutiny, which slowed down the process of running the licenses. Apparently the Complainant misinterpreted what he had said. The Captain indicated that the officer has been in the PD for about 30 years and had no incidents against him. The Captain agreed to meet with Nabil and the Complainant. Staff is working with all parties to set up a meeting at the Mosque. The goal will be to see if this can be clarified in general for the members of the Arab/mosque community and the police department so that there is a better understanding of the procedures required of the police and the sensitivity of the Middle Eastern/Muslim population to this issue.

In an ongoing conflict between next-door neighbors regarding noise, the Complainant alleged that the Respondent played her music too loud and the Respondent alleged that the Complainant's birds were too noisy. Staff spoke to both parties and both have agreed to be respectful toward one another, not to interact negatively and address noise levels. Both alleged there might have been some racial prejudice on the part of the other, but staff found that the tension was motivated by the noise. Both the Complainant and Respondent are multiethnic and racial, and each denied any bias motivation. The block is and has been multiracial and both interacted with others on the block of other races and ethnicities. No further tension or incidents have been reported and the Complainant is satisfied with the resolution.

The PCHR was informed of a racial incident involving flyers printed with racially offensive harassing statements had been distributed to homes on the 1300 block of South 15th Street. The 17th PD CRO took a police report, notified the Police Conflict Prevention and Resolution Unit (CPR) and South Detectives, and requested the assistance of PCHR. Staff communicated at length with the 17th PD CRO and advised CPR that PCHR was involved, then offered and requested to mutually share information. Staff met with the block captain and also spoke to several other neighbors who had been impacted (individually). Staff also contacted a local community group to make the group aware of this isolated incident. The 17th PD Captain prepared a letter assuring residents that the incident was being addressed by the PD and introduced them to PCHR staff and our services. Staff followed up with residents to determine if they were satisfied with police and the response of PCHR and they were. Staff gave a presentation on PCHR and the Disputes resolution Program at a follow-up 17th PD meeting to a group of about 30 block captains in general area, including this block. No further incidents have been reported and no arrests have made.

*

A white Grays Ferry family reported ongoing harassment of their teenaged daughter (white female) by other teens (black females and black males). The family requested assistance in writing from the Mayor, City Council, and 17th PD because they felt the harassment was racial. The 17th PD and community organizations were in contact with the Complainant. Staff advised the Complainant to make 911 police reports and note any ethnic slurs so the reports could be addressed on that basis. Staff is working with the Complainant to build understanding among the groups. Staff met with community groups, which views this as a youth-on-youth matter. The main youth (black female) involved in slurs/harassment was identified to police and 17th PD indicated there would be follow-up. The youth was subsequently picked-up by police. Staff will monitor the situation closely for any future incidents.

*

A Complainant and his family moved into a home about 4 years ago. The Respondent works for a contracting company. The Complainant and the Respondent were on friendly terms until last year, when after the Complainant's home burned down, he asked the Respondent if he could help him get his company to work on his home with a discount. The Respondent told the Complainant that he could not do what he was asking, but will refer him to contractors. A few weeks passed and the Complainant yelled at the Respondent (from his home) that no one has contacted him and began to curse at him. On another occasion, when the Complainant's daughter was walking their family's dog, the Respondent approached the Complainant's daughter, complaining about the dog that began to bark. The Complainant then called agencies to complain about the barking dog. According to the Respondent, the dog only barks when someone approaches his home or when chasing squirrels in the yard. No other neighbor has complained about the dog. More recently, the Complainant installed a camera in his yard, facing the Respondent's yard, and also called his job complaining that he tried to run him over with a company car. The Complainant denied the Respondent's allegations and believes that the Respondent is doing this because he wanted him to help him get a deal with the contracting company that he works for. Both parties have made damaging statements about each other. The Respondent accused the Complainant of being a "bully and a pervert" and the Complainant sent a letter to the block accusing the Respondent of being "inconsiderate and bad parents." Staff explained to the parties the PCHR and CRD program and the parties agreed to mediation. A mediation session took place at the 8th PD. After two hours, both parties were able to come up with an agreement.

*

The white Complainant, who moved to Somerton, (a predominantly white area in Northeast Philadelphia), has black family members and black friends who visited him. The Complainant alleged that a neighbor was harassing him because he doesn't like black people visiting on the block. Every time the Complainant has his black family or black friends over, the neighbor stares at the Complainant, and blocks his driveway. Recently, the Complainant got a letter from the neighbor's lawyer that stated that they are taking the Complainant to court for putting up Halloween decorations. The Complainant thinks that this was just another incident of harassment by his neighbor. The Complainant stated that they have had an ongoing dispute with his neighbor for about a year over easement of the back alleyway. The Complainant claimed that they own the area of the alley behind the neighbor's house. Both parties have gone to court over the problem. The Complainant stated that he hired a lawyer, and in arbitration, he was advised not to park in the back "to avoid any more disputes " The

Complainant also stated in court that he had his property surveyed and it appeared that the alley is public property. The Respondent filed a complaint with his lawyers saying that the Complainant's decoration was offensive to him because it was a way of making fun him as one sign hanging over his shed read "Schizophrenia Alley." The Complainant was advised by his lawyer to take the decorations down to avoid confrontations. The Complainant had a gathering in his yard and one of the Respondent's family members walked up and down the alley pushing an empty stroller against his fence. The Complainant also said his property had been vandalized. A PCHR Representative explained the DRP process and the filing of a Compliance Division case. The PCHR Representative then drove through the neighborhood. After driving around the area, the Respondent began to harass and threaten the PCHR Representative. The PCHR Representative called police for assistance. While waiting for police, the male continued to threaten and intimidate the PCHR Representative. According to the Complainant, 1) the case of which the alley belongs to is in court, and 2) after a survey it was decided that the property and alley belonged to the city, and not the Respondent. PCHR informed the Complainant that given that the case is in court, PCHR could not intervene at this time.

*

A black male alleged that a while male held a noose in front of him and said to the Complainant, *"I wanna hang somebody today."* The black male responded by saying, *"You ain't doing a dammed thing to me."* The white male said, *"This is a joke, I am sorry."* The Respondent stated to police that he was just playing with the Complainant, and that what he said was "I got my wife a new necklace," showing the noose to him. Both men work at a construction site where the Complainant is a Hoist Operator. A PCHR met with the Complainant at his job site. According to the Complainant, workers get impatient waiting for the hoist to come to get them. On the date of the incident, the Respondent was angry that he had to wait. When he entered the hoist he showed the Hoist Operator a rope with a noose and said, "I feel like hanging someone today." The Respondent then said that it was a joke and that he had made the noose as a necklace for his wife. The Complainant told him that the incident was not a joke. The employer company fired the Respondent and stated that it they had zero tolerance for that type of behavior. The PCHR Representative suggested to the Complainant that his complaint was more appropriate for the PCHR Compliance Division. On another morning, the Complainant observed that someone wrote suggestive racial slurs on the bathroom door. The Complainant then called PCHR to let the agency know that he was let go of his job. The PCHR Representative discussed the case as possible employment discrimination. The Complainant's then filed with EEOC and the Pennsylvania Commission on Human Relations. The PCHR then closed the case.

*

A white male who lived with his wife had lived in his house for 4 years and his wife had lived in the house for 30 years. The Complainant alleged that the Respondent constantly harassed him and his wife, poisoned his plants, tried to run him off the road and played loud music. When the Complainant was asked when the feud began, he answered a year ago when he needed roof work and the Respondent recommended a roofer. The Respondent paid the roofer and demanded that the Complainant pay him. The Complainant alleged that the roofer did not finish the job well, and put a "stop payment" on a check he had given to the roofer. The Complainant stated that he is putting his home up for sale, but wanted the Respondent to stop harassing him and prospective buyers. A PCHR Representative explained to the Complainant, the PCHR CRD program and procedures. The Complainant agreed to mediation, and stated that he is putting his home up for sale but wants the Respondent to stop harassing him and prospective buyers by playing music loud every time he sees people go into his home. The PCHR Representative contacted the owner of the property, the Respondent's father, who agreed to get along with the Complainant, the remaining time that he owns the property. The Respondent's father wanted to bring a resolution to this matter, and said that the will talk to his son to reinforce peace keeping efforts. The PCHR Representative informed the Complainant about the conversation with the property's owner. The Complainant confirmed that that he and the Respondent had a conversation that resulted in trying to resolve the dispute and to talk to each other if something else bothers them in the future.

*

PCHR was called to investigate an alleged racial incident at Fels High School. The principal of the school reported that a group of Hispanic students attacked a group of black students outside the school. According to sources, one of the black students is dating a Hispanic female student; the Hispanic students did not like that and jumped the black male student. In

retaliation, the black male students involved attacked the Hispanic students. PCHR met with many groups to collaborate with the investigation and organize conflict resolution mediation groups for the students involved. PCHR Representatives visited 20 homes and conducted approximately 27 interviews. After talking to parents, students and witnesses, it was concluded that: 1) the fight began after a Dominican student collided with a black student in the staircase during the transfer from one class period to another. The Dominican student said he apologized, but the other student would not accept his apologies. The black student then punched the Latino student and the Latino student responded with another punch. The Dominican student told his brother that a black student attacked him. The brother then decided to look for the student. The black students began to question him, why was he was looking for the other student. The students began to take sides. The situation escalated and the other black students, who had nothing to do with this dispute, became involved and started jumping Latino students. Some parents expressed their interest in resolving the issues and becoming more involved. Students interviewed said that they would participate in conflict resolution or mediations. It was also suggested that 1) the school's safety plan be reviewed, 2) volunteer (parents and community persons) be recruited for security, 3) bilingual volunteers and bilingual school liaisons be recruited, 4) connect interested parents with the Community Builders Program, and 5) have Conflict Resolution workshops.

*

A Complainant was fixing her storm door and the Respondent's 16-year-old grandson went on her porch and started to play with the door. The grandson is a friend of the Complainant's 16 year-old daughter. The Complainant kept telling him to stop and noticed that the screws on the storm door were loose so she tightened the screw with a blade she had on her. The Respondent's grandson continued to push the door and while the Complainant was working on it, the blade accidentally cut him. The Respondent said that although he apologized and told the Complainant what had happened, the harassment continued alleging that the Complainant cut him deliberately. The Complainant told the PCHR Representative that the Respondent's grandson and granddaughter were responsible for vandalizing his property. The Respondent's grandson denied vandalizing the Complainant's property and the Respondent denied knowing of his grandson doing damage to the property. The Respondent's wife, an elderly woman, said that her grandchildren came to her home to help her, and some times they stay with her. The Respondent stated that she was sorry that the Complainant's property was vandalized and that she has talked to her grandchildren.

Police advised the Respondent's grandson to stay away from the Complainant's property. The Complainant also said that only recently had the Respondent said hello to her and that things seemed to be better. However, other acts of vandalism continued. All parties agreed to participate in a Mediation Meeting. An agreement resulted from the meeting. The Complainant apologized to the Respondent and his grandson promised to stop his poor behavior and to help his grandmother with the other grandchildren. The possibility of the Complainant moving into a senior citizens apartment will also be explored. The complainant will ask her grandchildren to stop coming to her home. PCHR will continue to monitor the case and follow-up with all parties. The Complainant and the Respondent shook hands and hugged each other at the end of the Mediation Meeting.

Honors and Awards

Good Shepherd Mediation Program

Jonah Roll, PCHR Human Relations Representative, Community Relations Division, received the 2007 "Community Mediator of the Year" Award of the Goode Shepherd Mediation Program. Cheryl Cutrona, Executive Director of the Good Shepherd Mediation Program presented the award to Jonah Roll at a recognition ceremony held in May.

Jonah Roll, PCHR Human Relations Rep. accepts the Community Mediator of the Year Award from Cheryl Cutrona, Executive Director, Good Shepherd Mediation Program. (Photo Credit: Kyle Morris, Good Shepherd Mediation Program)

Jonah has volunteered with Good Shepherd as a mediator since 1996. In 2006, he became involved in Good Shepherd's Victim-Offender Conferencing program, working with first-time, juvenile offenders, their parents and the victims. In March 2008, Jonah will complete his post-Masters program in Conflict Resolution at Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.

Congratulations Jonah!

E.P.I.C (Equal Partners in Change) Stakeholders

Patricia G. Coyne, PCHR Human Relations Representative, Community Relations Division, received an award in the form of an engraved plaque for her support for and participation in the activities of the Kensington EPIC Stakeholders, which serves the 24th, 25th, and 26th police districts. EPIC Community Stakeholder Groups consist of individuals who live or work in a community. There are ten stakeholder groups located throughout Philadelphia that are facilitated by the Department of Human Services. The groups meet monthly and utilize a process called the "Equal Partnership In Change," to develop and implement action plans that complement and enhance their assets and address their challenges and to nurture and mentor community residence to take a leadership role in their community.

Point Breeze Network Plus

Patricia was also honored in the form of an engraved crystal award from the Board of the Point Breeze Network Plus, a group of community agencies, residents, town watch, block captains, businesses, elected officials, law enforcement, City services, and educational, cultural, social, and religious institutions representative the of the Point Breeze area of South Philadelphia. The Point Breeze Network Plus meets monthly to share information and resources, establish and maintain networks and develop and support collaborative actions and activities.

Patricia G. Coyne, PCHR Human Relations Representative (sixth on left on back row), accepts an award from members and the Board of the Point Breeze Network Plus. The award was presented by State Representative Harold James and Wayne Rahman, President, Point Breeze Network Plus. (Photo Credit: Don Tgerry, Photographer)

Congratulations Patricia!

Prayer Vigil for a Restored Civility

A bullet pierced through the heart and soul of Philadelphia when Philadelphia Police Officer Charles "Chuck" Cassidy succumbed to a gunshot wound sustained on October 31, 2007 when he walked into a robbery in progress. Officer Cassidy was checking in on a Dunkin' Donuts store at the corner of 66th Avenue and Broad Street that had previously been robbed. Unknown to Officer Cassidy, there was a robbery in progress in the store. As Officer Cassidy entered, the suspect turned and fired, hitting the officer's head.

The suspect then stole Officer Cassidy's service weapon as he fled. Officer Cassidy was transported to Albert Einstein Medical Center, where he re remained until succumbing to the gunshot wound on November 1, 2007. As a result of the largest manhunt in recent memory, members of the Miami, Florida, Police Department arrested a suspect, on November 6, 2007, after a 911 call was made indicating the man was in an area homeless shelter.

Officer Cassidy, 54, was a 25-year veteran of the police department. His wife and three children survive him. The entire City of Philadelphia, region and nation mourned the loss of Officer Cassidy.

To help heal the city, people of all faiths, races and cultures came together on November 2, 2007 for a "Prayer Vigil for a Restored Civility," organized under the auspices of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations. Rev. James S. Allen, Sr., Chairperson, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations, served as host.

PCHR Executive Director Nick Taliaferro and Spiritual Leaders Call upon citizens to renew the vital cords of civility. (Photo Credit: Tony Webb, Office of the City Representative)

Congress members, state representatives, police, and the Mayor and the community at large stood up shoulder-to-shoulder in unison against the senseless shootings and killings of not only civilians, but of members of the esteemed law enforcement community.

"The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations convenes this gathering of Spiritual Leaders today to call upon the citizens of Philadelphia to renew, and protect, the tender and vital cords of *Civility, said Nick Taliaferro, PCHR Executive Director. "As we gather we shall remember that which has been lost, encourage that which remains, and pray for that which is still needed. We call upon every well-intended citizen to join us in a campaign to make our City not only safer, but also more vibrant, alive and compassionate. We can…*and we will*!"*

The ecumenical service included a representation of the entire community, with readings and prayers from Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Protestant clerics. A Declaration of Civility as well as A Prayer for the Consolation of the Wounded, a Prayer for the Families of Those Injured, a Prayer for the Families of those who have Offended, A Prayer for the Restoration of a Peaceful Community, and a Prayer of Protection for the Guardians were offered.

The Prayer Vigil for a Restored Civility was viewed on Jumbotron on Dilworth Plaza. (Photo Credit: Tony Webb, Office of the City Representative)

Annual Human Rights Awards Luncheon Honors 16 Community Activists

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) honored 15 community leaders and organizations at its Annual Human Rights Awards Luncheon on October 11, 2007, at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

"These individuals and organizations have exceeded all expectations in increasing civility in our communities," said James S. Allen, Sr., Chairperson of the Commission. "Throughout our nation's rich history, we have overcome many challenges by finding strength in the diversity of our people. Drawing on the talents, energy and knowledge of people from many different backgrounds, we have succeeded in reaching our shared goals."

"To our awardees, we would like to thank them for jobs well done," said W. Nick Taliaferro, PCHR Executive Director. "Their service to the citizens of this city is appreciated and laudatory, and we pause to honor them. It is our hope that the small tokens of our appreciation will serve to encourage them to continue to actualize both their gifts and their own sense of mission and mandate. It is our hope that they will continue to strive for the greater good."

PCHR Executive Director Nick Taliaferro and Roxanne E. Covington, PCHR Commissioner, present the 2007 Clarence Farmer Service Award to Dawn Staley. (Photo Credit: Hector Valentin, Dept. of Records*)*

Dawn Staley, Founder of The Dawn Staley Foundation, Coach of Temple University Women's Basketball Team, three-time Olympic Gold Medalist and five-time WNBA All-Star, received the PCHR highest honor - the *PCHR Clarence Farmer Service Award.* Staley, founded the Dawn Staley Foundation in the summer of 2004 focusing on inter-group relations and giving inner-city children of all backgrounds positive input as it sponsors after-school programs, a three-hour focus on academics and athletics at the Hank Gathers Recreation Center, as well as summer leagues and fund-raising activities.

Staley has garnered both local and national attention for her community service endeavors. In 2005, she was awarded with Philadelphia's prestigious Wanamaker Award, presented annually to the "athlete, team or organization that has done the most to reflect credit upon Philadelphia and to the team or sport in which they excel." This was the second Wanamaker Award for Staley who is the only individual woman to ever win the award.

Rev. Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., proudly displays the PCHR Chairperson's Award. (Photo Credit: Hector Ventin, Dept. of Records.

The PCHR Chairperson's Award was presented to the Rev. Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., for organizing the nationally acclaimed Amachi Program, a national faith-based mentoring model for children of incarcerated parents. Dr. Goode received two prestigious awards in 2006: the *Civic Ventures $100,000 Purpose Prize* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer's Citizen of the Year*. He is an ordained Baptist Minister with over 50 years service at the First Baptist Church of Paschall. He also led faith-based housing for low and moderate-income persons. He was the first African American member and later Chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. He again broke racial barriers with his appointment as Managing Director for the City of Philadelphia. He would follow that as the city's first African American Mayor for two terms. He subsequently spent 7 years as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education under the Clinton Administration.

Paul and Shirley Randleman, founders, the Philadelphia Beauty Showcase National Historical Museum, accepts The PCHR Human Rights Award for Arts & Culture from *PCHR Executive Director Nick Taliaferro. (Photo Credit: Hector Valentin, Dept. of Records)*

The PCHR Human Rights Award for Arts & Culture, presented to the Philadelphia Beauty Showcase National Historical Museum (PBSNHM) and the Picasso Project. The PBSNHM, founded in 2002 by Paul and Shirley Randleman, shares the history of the African American experience in the beauty and hair industry in America with people of all races and ethnicities in an effort to build bridges and break down barriers to understanding and cooperation through a shared interest in personal beauty. The museum, which is located at 510-15 S. 52nd Street, is working with the School District of Philadelphia to establish a student visiting and vocational program in which school students of all backgrounds will visit the museum and learn of the struggles of this population and relate to it from their own beauty perspectives. The museum is also working with the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians to establish a "welcoming center" for all neighbors – from the long-time white and black residents, to the newer African, West Indies, and Asian immigrants and refugees.

The Picasso Project was founded in 2002, to enhance and enrich educational opportunities in the arts offered to students of the School District of Philadelphia, and to increase advocacy for public school funding for art and music. Under the direction of Gretchen Elise Iversen, Project Coordinator, and Shelly Yanoff, Executive Director, Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY), the Picasso Project is devoted to building awareness of the limitless potential of the arts to engage every student in active learning that advances intellectual and personal development.

The PCHR Human Rights Award for Community Service, presented to Thomas Paine Cronin, who began his career with PCHR in 1970 as a civil rights investigator and retired as President of AFSCME District Council 47, and has worked addressed civil rights issues to improve the quality of life for all Philadelphians; ParkWatch #9015, whose multi-racial membership has grown from 5 to 55 active volunteers in the Elmwood and Eastwick neighborhood of the 12th Police District; Gregory R. Benjamin, Founder and Coordinator of the Kingsessing Fifth Division Community of Neighbors and Block Captain Association, which was created to provide a channel of communication of mutual interests may be exchanged between residents of all backgrounds; Robert G. Seabury, who developed a coalition of diverse neighbors to create the West Girard Community Council (WGCC) to further their interests in the aftermath of the 27th and Girard community's successful cross-cultural, cross-economic, cross-social, cross-ethnic/racial efforts to resist the establishment of a McDonald's in their community; and Jorge Aráuz who has created a positive presence for peace in his North Philadelphia community through the establishment of Casa Amistad (Friendship House), which is located by Fairhill Park at 4th and Lehigh.

PCHR Executive Director Nick Taliaferro presents a PCHR Human Rights Award for Community Service to Robert G. Seabury for creating the West Girard Community Council. (Photo Credit: Hector Valentin, Dept. of Records)

The P/O Gary Skerski Award for Meritorious Service, presented to Captain Kevin J. Bethel (#49), Commanding Officer of the 17th Police District, who along with his Police District Advisory Council has developed a multicultural, multiethnic partnership with residents and businesses to improve police and business relations and reduce crime in South Philadelphia.

The PCHR Human Rights Award for Corporate Responsibility, presented to Health Partners for its anti-violence initiatives to create a plan of action in conjunction with other community and city efforts to reduce violence in the city; and Sneaker Villa for partnering with City Year (a member of the AmeriCorps program) to unite young adults, ages 17-24, from diverse backgrounds for a

demanding year of full-time community service, leadership development and civic engagement. Led by Jason Lutz, the President and CEO, Sneaker Villa has supported a team of corps members who have served more than 35,000 hours of community service working directly with students of Overbrook High School and surrounding neighborhoods in generating over $90,000 in educational awards for corps members. Sneaker Villa employees have also served more than 600 hours of service at the MLK Day of Service in January and hosted a series of professional development trainings for corps members and staff.

The PCHR Professional in Human Rights Award, presented to Samuel Staten, Sr., Business Manger of Laborers' International Union of North American Local 332, for making a difference in our multi-cultural communities in leading his union to giving more than $800,000 and encouraging his members to become involved in their local communities by volunteering time, sharing their talents; and John Cella, Director of the city's AIDS Activities Coordinating Office, which is responsible for administering over $40,000,000 in AIDS Care and prevention funds which has resulted in an additional $800,000 in services through administrative savings and efficiencies.

Samuel Staten, Sr., Business Manager of Laborers' International Union of North American Local 332, receives the PCHR Professional in Human Rights Award from Philadelphia Fair Housing Commissioner Gisela Prieto, Anthony Lewis, Jr., and PCHR Executive Director Nick Taliaferro. (Photo Credit, Hector Valentin, Dept. of Records)

The PCHR Human Rights Award to a Nonprofit Organization, presented to the Community and Police Interracial Task Force (CPITF) and the Nonprofit Technology Resources (NTR). The CPITF, which was founded in 1989 as a representative, community based, nonprofit organization to maintain a communications network among residents, community groups, and law enforcement agencies to promote inter-group harmony and reduce tensions in the East Division of North Philadelphia. Under the direction of Pioquinto "Skip" Voluntad, Jr. and Donna Diehl, CPITF is dedicated to reducing the frequency and severity of violence by addressing racial and inter-group tensions in the community.

Stanley Pokras founded the NTR in 1974 (originally known as the Public Interest Media Project) to help other nonprofits in the Philadelphia region and the people they serve take advantage of information technology. The NTR reached into underserved and minority communities to ensure grass-roots groups and the people they serve have the same opportunities as larger, better-funded corporations the ride the new wave of technology. Now, 34 years later, success has not deterred NTR from its mission as the organization continues to expand the nature and impact of its outreach.

The Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission

Since 1993, the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations has provided staff for the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission (PFHC), which addresses unfair rental practices in the city. The PFHC is a neutral agency advocating for fairness in rental property relationships. A tenant may file a complaint with the PFHC:

1) If the tenant is being threatened with illegal eviction. Rent must be current.

2) If a landlord is raising rent in the face of housing code violations.

3) If another term of a lease is being violated.

4) To stop a landlord from retaliating against a tenant for reporting housing code violations to the Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) or in retaliation for filing a complaint with the PFHC.

Philadelphia
Fair Housing Commission
2007 Service Report

	Number
Intakes……	183
Complaints Docketed……	179
Cases Prepared for Hearings……..	313
Cases Heard……	217
Orders Mailed ……	560
Landlord/Tenant (L/T) Court Letters……	43
Referrals Made……	348
Cases Closed and Filed……	155
Contacts:	
Telephone……	5,018
Office Visits……..	565
Mail……	1,538
Fax……	222

Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission
Complaint Highlights

Eviction

A Landlord was attempting to evict his Tenant while there were Licenses and Inspections' code violations in the property i.e. dysfunctional heating system; dysfunctional electrical outlets in the bedroom; broken doors and windows; leaky toilet on the 2nd floor. The PFHC heard the case and issued an Order that required the Landlord to correct all open code violations; obtain a "complied status certificate" from L& I after all repairs were made; forward a copy of the Rental License in 60 days; do not collect any rent from the Tenant while the property is deemed "dangerous to human life." In addition, the Tenant was awarded a 6-month rental credit from June through November due to the inconvenience and hardship that Tenant suffered as a result of the property being rated as "dangerous to human life."

Unfair Rental Practices/Rent Increase

A Tenant filed charges against their Landlord for an unfair rent increase, plus additional late fees for withholding the unfair rent increase, while there were Licenses and Inspections' code violations on the property such as—front door lock not secured; kitchen electricity not working; foul odors coming from front of the building; and inoperable smoke detectors. The PFHC heard the case and issued an Order- that there be no change in the terms and conditions of the lease; that there be no eviction or rent increase; that all violations be corrected and L & I re-inspect the property; that the Landlord obtain a "complied status certificate" from L & I after correcting all violations; that the contractors give the Tenant 24 hours notice to gain access to the premises except in case of an emergency; that there be no harassment or retaliation by either party; that the Landlord refrain from charging the Tenant excess late fees (no higher than 6% per annum); that the Tenant be reimbursed the late fees paid from June to November and be given a credit to her account. In addition, the Tenant was

awarded one month's security deposit, which was unfairly withheld by the Landlord and one month's rent for Landlord's violation of a previous Order.

Eviction

A Tenant alleged that her Landlord was unfairly evicting her from the property (home) while there were L & I violations on the property such as porch roof leaking; door frame off in kitchen; front door in need of repair; bathroom skylight leaking; water leaks in through basement door; mold in basement; bathroom sink clogged; and mice infestation. As a result of multiple hearings, the PFHC issued an Order—that the Landlord make all repairs to the property and obtain a complied status certificate from L & I; that the Tenant continue to place the rent in an escrow account for 5 months; that both parties cooperate with the contractors and repair schedule. The Landlord was awarded 5 months rent after all repairs were made and he obtained a complied status certificate from L & I. The Tenant eventually moved out of the property on his own.

Eviction

A Tenant, renting an apartment, filed against a Landlord for an unfair eviction alleging that there were building code violations in the property such as: water leaking from ceiling; hole in the ceiling; stains on the walls; mildew in the bathroom; leaky shower; debris in front of door. The PFHC heard the case. The Tenant agreed to place her rent in escrow for several months while the Landlord made repairs to the property. At the second hearing the Tenant could not produce an updated escrow account showing all rent due, therefore, the case was dismissed and the Landlord was given permission to proceed with the terms and conditions of the lease and file a complaint in Landlord/Tenant court against the Tenant.

Rent Increase/Eviction/Retaliation

An 83-year-old Tenant filed a complaint with the Fair Housing Commission, charging illegal eviction and rental increase, and retaliation. She had been residing in the property for about 40 years, and had never been late in her rent. By her accounts, problems started after she reported to the Landlord two incidents, one of her accidental fall, and another of the discovery of a mouse, in the property. The Landlord responded by raising her rent and threatening to ruin her credit. The Commission awarded the tenant a two-month rental credit, to compensate her for pain and suffering, stemming from the Landlord's unfair rental practice.

Eviction

A group of students renting a property filed for illegal eviction at the Fair Housing Commission. The students reported that the property had an unsecured front door, and almost no weather-proofing. There was very little, if any, heat, for an entire winter. In addition, gas leaked for about four months, leaving the Tenants with exorbitant gas bills. L & I deemed the property "dangerous to human life and the public welfare." The Landlord was notified of all the problems, but refused to make any repairs. There was reported evidence of illegal entries carried out by the Landlord. The Commission granted the tenants not only a four-month rental credit, but also their request to vacate in a few days, out of consideration for their suffering, frustration and fear.

Operating Budget: Fiscal Years 2006-2009 Year Ended June 30, 2007			
Description	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Adopted Budget	FY 2007 Adopted Budget
Personal Services	1,968,676	2,090,420	2,111,219
Contracts / Leases	47,131	47,131	49,119
Material & Supplies	19,274	19,274	14,365
Total	2,035,081	2,156,825	2,174,703

Revenues Generated	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Budget
Case Closing Reimbursement	159,281	125,000	125,000

Note: The PCHR received a work-sharing contract with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate 325 complaints in federal FY 2006, for $175,500, and in federal FY 2007, a contract to investigate 300 cases for $167,500. The PCHR anticipates receiving a slightly different sized EEOC contract in federal FY 2008.

History

The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, approved by the electors on April 17, 1951, established the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR). The PCHR assumed the powers and duties of the former Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC). The FEPC, empowered on March 11, 1948, received, investigated and adjusted charges of discrimination in employment. The FEPC also held Public Hearings, issued *Orders* and instituted educational measures that combated prejudice and discrimination in employment based upon race, color, religion or national origin.

The FEPC was composed of five Commissioners. The Mayor appointed three Commissioners and the President of City Council appointed two. Common Pleas Court Judge Gerald F. Flood was the first Chairman of the FEPC. Serving with him were Louis B. F. Raycroft, Coordinator of the Bureau of Veterans Re-Employment Rights, U.S. Department of Labor; Norman Blumberg, Vice President of the Central Labor Union of Philadelphia (AFL); F. Curtis Davis, County Adjutant of the American Veterans of World War II; and Tanner G. Duckrey, Assistant to the Board of Superintendents of the Philadelphia Public Schools.

The FEPC held its first meeting on May 24, 1948. On October 22, 1948, City Council made an appropriation of $8,500 for the Commission's use during the last two months of 1948 and an appropriation of $49,700 for 1949. These appropriations led to the appointment of a staff and the development of an educational program.

The first staff of the FEPC consisted of eight persons. In 1951, staff was composed of 14 employees. The Commission's appropriation totaled approximately $120,000. The number of Commissioners of the new PCHR expanded from five to nine.

When the powers and duties of the FEPC were taken over by the new PCHR on January 7, 1952, Philadelphia became the first city in the United States to have in its basic charter a provision for an official human relations agency. Robert J. Callaghan, Esq., replaced Judge Flood as Chairman of the FEPC and also served as the first Chairman of the new PCHR. Commissioners that served with him were Nathan L. Edelstein, Sadie T. M. Alexander, Francis J. Coyle, Elizabeth H. Fetter, James H. Jones, Albert J. Nesbitt, Lawrence M. C. Smith, and Leon C. Sunstein, Sr.

Dr. Frank S. Loescher, who served as Executive Director of the FEPC, held the same position with the new PCHR. George Schermer succeeded him in February 1952. In 1953, the PCHR drafted blue prints for its long-range program. The PCHR drew up specifications for staff organization and recruited professional personnel for the most comprehensive program in human relations that was ever attempted by an agency of government.

The initial staff was organized into four divisions: Public Law and Employment, Community Relations, Public Information and Research, and Office Services. A Housing Division was established in 1957. In the ensuing years, the PCHR instituted measures that reduced restrictive housing practices. Extensive studies were also completed on the employment experiences of white and black workers and nonwhite residential patterns. Studies on services to Puerto Rican residents led to the addition of two bilingual persons to staff. In 1961, the PCHR held a seminar for the mass media on the effects of news on inter-group relations. A Public Inquiry was also held that year following an outbreak of incidents involving the movement of black families into all-white neighborhoods.

In 1962, City Council amended the Philadelphia Code, creating the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission (PFHC). The PFHC enforced the City's Fair Housing Ordinance, which addressed unfair rental practices. City Council passed the Fair Practices Ordinance (FPO) in 1963, replacing the Fair Employment Practices Ordinance.

Civil disturbances erupted in North Philadelphia in the summer of 1964. The PCHR called together community leaders in an emergency meeting. The action shortened the disturbance and eased its effects. After the disturbance, City Council provided funding that established the PCHR' North Philadelphia Field Office.

In 1967, two more amendments were added to the FPO, which made housing discrimination illegal in the sale of owner-occupied, one- and two-family homes. In the same year, the PCHR opened a Field Office in West Philadelphia. Extensive efforts by the PCHR opened-up equal employment opportunities in the insurance and building industries.

In 1968, the PCHR introduced a *Helpmobile,* a City Hall on Wheels. The *Helpmobile* made tours during the summer months of inner city neighborhoods and distributed information on the services of the PCHR. Staff also registered complaints of discrimination and received requests for City services from the vehicle. In 1969, the PCHR added a Rumor Central Telephone System that answered emergencies and squelched inflammatory rumors. Also that year, a new South Philadelphia Field Office opened.

During the 1970's, the PCHR strengthened its service to the City's Spanish-speaking neighborhoods. Staff interpreted the City's rehabilitation programs and prepared Spanish-language literature for residents and the media. Also in 1970, the PCHR developed for the Philadelphia Police Department a comprehensive training program on human relations.

In 1972, prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of sex in all areas were added to the FPO. Housing and Public Accommodation provisions were also expanded, as well as provisions that protected the rights of disabled persons. In 1980, marital status, source of income, any age, and presence of children were added as protected classes to the housing provisions of the FPO.

In 1975, the PCHR discovered that many incidents that were reported as inter-group tensions were in reality a dispute between neighbors. The Dispute Resolution Program (DRP) was thus born, helping residents resolve disputes among themselves. In most cases, parties in the dispute have an ongoing relationship with each other and are usually neighbors. Other municipalities, private and public agencies have emulated the DRP.

Landmark amendments were added to the FPO in 1982. These amendments made discrimination illegal in all areas on the basis of sexual orientation. The amendment also banned discrimination in employment on the bases of age 40 and above, as well as physical and/or mental handicap. In 1985, the PCHR began accepting complaints of discrimination in the delivery of City services. In 1987, the Mayor issued Executive Order 1-87 that formalized the policy. In 1986, the City Solicitor defined AIDS as a disability under the FPO. The Mayor also issued Executive Order 4-86 that prohibited discrimination based on AIDS in the delivery of City services.

In 1984, the PCHR held a Public Hearing on *Asians and their Neighbors*. The Hearing resulted in a better understanding of the human relations impact of federal, state and local policies on refugee resettlement. The Hearing also helped in producing a better climate of of understanding citywide. This helped in developing positive programs that assisted the process of creating a peaceful acceptance of

diversity. The Mayor implemented some of the findings of the Hearing, including the hiring of bilingual Asian Human Relations Representatives, Police and Fire Dispatchers and Social Workers, and the formation of the Mayor's Commission on Asian/Pacific Islander Affairs.

In 1985, the PCHR held a Public Hearing that looked into allegations that community members were attempting to drive an African-American woman out of Frankford. Subsequently, one man was convicted of vandalism, ethnic intimidation and civil rights violations. Frankford residents, who were appalled by the incident, formed the Frankford Human Relations Coalition. The Coalition became a model community human relations organization.

The PCHR has been using computer and information technology as an aide to accomplishing its mission since the mid-1980s. The agency gradually increased computer usage over the years. In 1987, the PCHR implemented a computerized Centralized Intake and Referral Services Unit. The Unit reduced the amount of time residents spent at the PCHR filing complaints. It also sped the investigation of cases and significantly reduced the number of inaccurate referrals. In addition, the Philadelphia Computing Center (PCC) automated the PCHR case records. This reduced the amount of time necessary to process case records and improved case tracking and management for the CRD.

In 1989, the PCHR began integrating its business and information resource plan. Training was expanded to professional staff, which reduced reliance on clerical support. Selected acquisition of hardware and software extended the benefits of computerization to more staff.

The PCHR conducted a Public Hearing in 1990 that examined allegations of disparate and discriminatory treatment of the City's Latino community in City employment and the delivery of City services. The City subsequently implemented many of the recommendations that came from the Public Hearing. Also in 1990, the PCHR implemented its Local Area Network (LAN), starting with just 25 computers and one printer.

In August 1992, the local office of the EEOC acknowledged the PCHR computer efforts in a letter that commented on the PCHR' HERO case tracking database system: *"The closure report for the month of July also shows that PCHR is timely entering closures into HERO. Because of this timely entering of closures, PCHR, alone among FEPAs (Fair Employment Practices Agencies) reporting to this office, is able to generate closures reports via HERO."* Again in September 1993, the local EEOC stated: *"We commend PCHR for the completeness and accuracy of its data entries."*

City Council adopted Bill No. 412 in 1990, expanding the meaning of Public Accommodation in the FPO. The amendment added health care providers and mortuary services as a Public Accommodation, and protected from discrimination residents who lived with or were perceived as living with HIV and/or AIDS.

Over the 4th of July holiday in 1991; the PCHR was the host agency for the 43rd Annual Conference of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA). The IAOHRA is a nonprofit association of federal, state, provincial, county, and municipal human rights/human relation's agencies in the United States and Canada.

In 1991 and 1992, the PCHR received grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and organized two conferences on *Fair Lending Laws*. The conferences began a continuing dialogue between community groups and lenders about mortgage and community development issues. Proceedings were published from these conferences and distributed nationally. The PCHR also, after many years of conducting undercover rental and sales testing that accessed the existence of housing discrimination, received a grant from HUD. With the grant, the PCHR became the first Administrative Agency in the United States to conduct *Pre-Application Mortgage Lending Testing*.

In June 1993, the PCHR began providing staff for the PFHC. The PFHC prohibit landlords from engaging in unfair rental practices, evict a tenant or give a tenant a rent increase while a property contains housing code violations. The PFHC also prohibits a landlord from retaliating against a tenant for reporting code violations to the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L & I). The PCHR automated all records of the PFHC, enabling it to process PFHC cases without hiring additional staff.

The PCHR convened a Public Inquiry in 1994, examining allegations brought by the Women's Law Project that substance abuse centers and programs were not providing services to pregnant women. As a result of the Public Inquiry, substance abuse centers reversed policies and began providing services to pregnant woman. Also in 1994, the PCHR initiated the Interagency Civil Rights Task Force. The Task Force consisted of two groups. One group was made up of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. This group met periodically, shared information about hate crimes and established closer working relationships within the law enforcement community.

The other group included representatives of non-government agencies. This group strengthened connections among private and public agencies. In part because of these established relationships and the sharing of information among Task Force members, law enforcement successfully prosecuted perpetrators of several hate crimes. The Task Force was considered a model by other regions of the country.

In 1995, the PCHR collaborated with the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies and the Fielding Institute of California in instituting a special grant-funded neighborhood based project that was called *Focus Philadelphia.* The project used video technology that created a better understanding of diverse communities. Teens from Manayunk, Olney, North Philadelphia, South Philadelphia, the Attic (a gay/lesbian teen group of Voyage House) and Kensington identified in a 15-minute video problems facing their communities. In recognition of *Focus Philadelphia* as an innovative program that improved the quality of life in the City, then Mayor Edward G. Rendell was awarded an *Outstanding Achievement Award* by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Waste Management in the *1997 City Livability Award Program*.

In 1996, City Council passed Bill 960326, which amended the FPO to increase the Ordinance's statute of limitations from 90-days to 300-days. Philadelphians were given additional time to access services of the PCHR. The amended Ordinance also strengthened the PCHR' ability to coordinate services with state and federal agencies.

The PCHR partnered with IBM in 1996, which enhanced the agency's case tracking system. Out of this partnership came the first phase of the Contact Resolution Information System (CRIS), which began deployment in 1999. This system gave management the ability to track a case through each step of the investigative process. The project was completed with the joint efforts of the PCHR, IBM/Lotus and the Mayor's Office of Information Services (MOIS).

Using the CRIS application, record-keeping duplication was eliminated, which reduced the time required to process complaints. Today, the CRIS application is used in managing and tracking cases in the PCHR, the PFHC and the Domestic Partnership Program. The CRIS became a prototype of a standard business program that was redesigned for pubic sector use. Since the implementation of the CRIS, the PCHR upgraded all software and hardware that further enhanced case processing efficiency of the agency. In 1997 the PCHR upgraded its LAN, added e-mail and put a computer on each staff person's desk.

Historic Domestic Partnership bills were passed by City Council in 1998. The PCHR became responsible for implementing procedures for the registration of life partners. Amendments were added to the FPO, Bill 970750, which included a definition of Life Partnership and provisions that prohibited discrimination based on marital status in employment, housing, public accommodations, and the delivery of City services. In effect, the bill made Life Partners of City employees eligible for benefits under the City's and municipal union's various employee benefits plans. Bill 970745 amended the Retirement System Ordinance to allow members of the retirement system to name any person designated by the employee as beneficiaries and survivors.

The PCHR conducted a Public Hearing on *Race and the Criminal Justice System* in 1998. The Hearing elicited testimony from individuals who worked in or are familiar with the Criminal Justice System. The Hearing also examined the impact of race on a defendant's experience in the Criminal Justice System in general, and in particular, with regard to death penalty. Witnesses included representatives of the Philadelphia Police Department, the Public Defender's Office, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a number of public interest organizations, as well as various private attorneys. The PCHR Commissioners issued recommendations that called for establishing a Committee or Commission within the Court System to address racial bias in the courts.

Other recommendations called for the monitoring of forms used by the Philadelphia Police Department that discouraged and exposed racial profiling, the need for addressing racial profiling in jury selection and the need for studying race and gender bias in the Court

System. The recommendations also called for the need to institute discussions on racial and cultural diversity. Other recommendations emphasized the need for a campaign to educate all Philadelphians in understanding the importance of voting and serving on juries.

The PCHR engaged in many activities during the Republican National Convention (RNC), which was held in Philadelphia from July 31 to August 4, 2000. The PCHR met regularly with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies through the Interagency Civil Rights Task Force and developed strategies that dealt with demonstrations during the RNC. Special emphasis was given to the impact that protesters had on residential communities. The PCHR operated the City's Rumor Central Hotline during the RNC to maintain a two-way communication link with the public. The Hotline received more than 500 calls during first initial days and weekend following the Convention. The Hotline responded to rumors, provided correct information and assisted callers in gaining access to appropriate public and private services. In addition, the PCHR was an active intermediary during the many protests that took place before, during and after the Convention.

A great deal of the PCHR work in 2001 rose from the shadows of dust and debris that were left behind on September 11, 2001, a day that will forevermore reverberate in our minds and hearts. In the aftermath of this tragic attack on American soil, the PCHR moved forward methodically and established a dialogue with law enforcement, criminal justice and social services systems to promote tolerance-building initiatives and an understanding of the culture, customs and concerns of the Arab/Sikh/Muslim community. Also in 2001, the PCHR added the staff of the Police Advisory Commission (PAC) to its e-mail post office.

Philadelphia once again broke historic ground when City Council passed on May 16, 2002, and the Mayor signed on May 29, 2002, a landmark amendment to the FPO that added Gender Identity as a protected class. Transgender citizens who faced discrimination in employment, housing, use of public accommodation or the delivery of City services became eligible to file a complaint.

In 2003, the PCHR and the Center City Proprietors Association (CCPA), with the sponsorship of Citizens Bank, presented *Forging Alliances*, an historic initiative that encouraged the City's small/minority businesses and small business associations *"to come together to explore how to support each other in building better businesses, better business associations, and a better, more vital City economy."* Approximately 100 representatives from small/minority businesses and business associations participated in roundtable discussions with bank, City and other agency representatives. Facilitated by Human Relations Representatives of the PCHR, the discussions focused on the questions: "*What are the biggest obstacles to doing business in general and to your business specifically? Who has been the most and least helpful to you? What kind of support does your business/business association need? What were the most important issues discussed? What should be addressed at future meetings?*"

As a follow-up to *Forging Alliances*, the PCHR cosponsored *Marketing to Minorities* with the Center City Proprietors Association and other organizations to discuss strategies to address and be sensitive to the needs of various cultural groups in marketing products or services. Participants learned about specific strategies and sensitivities to utilize when dealing with individuals and groups from other cultures.

On May 11, 2006, PCHR held a forum at the Pennsylvania Convention Center for providers of services to immigrants and refugees. The purpose of the forum was to convene a meeting to hear from those that provide services to immigrants and refugees concerning who they serve, what parts of the city they provide the services in, whether their clients are encountering inter-group tension in any aspect of their lives and to hear suggestions as to where the continuing needs are. The forum also provided those that testified an opportunity to hear from one another and network to improve their own delivery of services.

To help heal the city following the fatal shooting of Philadelphia Police Officer Charles "Chuck" Cassidy, people of all faiths, races and cultures came together on November 2, 2007 for a "Prayer Vigil for a Restored Civility," organized under the auspices of the PCHR. Federal, state and city legislators, the Mayor, police and the community at large stood shoulder-to-shoulder in unison against the senseless shootings and killings of not only civilians, but of members of the esteemed law enforcement community.

A Public hearing in the PCHR vs. Geno's Steaks case was convened on December 14, 2007. The charge alleges that a sign posted in the Respondent's window, "This is America. When ordering, speak English," is in violation of the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance thereby discouraging patronage by non-English speaking customers, all because of national origin and/or ancestry. A ruling by the Hearing Panel is pending.