An aerial photograph of the Philadelphia skyline, featuring several prominent skyscrapers. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background shows a clear blue sky with some light clouds and a distant view of the city.

**City of Philadelphia
Commission on Human Relations
Fair Housing Commission**

2006 Annual Report



**PHILADELPHIA COMMISSION
ON HUMAN RELATIONS
PHILADELPHIA
FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION
34 SOUTH 11TH STREET, 6TH FLOOR
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107
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 DOMESTIC 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).

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CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION
34 South 11th Street, 6th Floor , Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone : 215-686-4670
TTY: 215-686-3238

JAMES S. ALLEN, Sr.
Chairperson, PCHR

RALPHE. BLANKS
Chairperson, FHC

W. NICK TALIAFERRO
Executive Director

Dear Friend:

Time flies when you're hard at work. And it goes by even quicker when you're surrounded by some of the most tremendous talent in city government. (banks to their cooperation and commitment. we have accomplished many tasks for citizens of our great City.

There is so much diversity and such a rich fabric of ethnic and cultural expression woven throughout the many neighborhoods of the City. What more could we want for ourselves and our children than to live and grow up in an environment that stretches and expands our sense of self and awareness and appreciation of others.

However. with the ebb and flow of changing demographics, comes the inevitable challenge for people to embrace change and not be threatened by it. It is the Commission's mission to assist community organizations. schools and neighbors around the City to facilitate positive inter-group relations, mediate disputes and promote goodwill among all citizens.

We also are mandated to enforce the City's broad civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and the provision of City services. In 2006, over 670 cases *were* filed and investigated and over \$637,562 in settlements were negotiated for those that filed complaints with the PCHR.

In 2006, the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission (PFIIC) held 206 hearings, resolved 169 complaints and docketed 19' new complaints concerning unfair rental practices.

We thank you for your past support throughout 2006 and pledge that we will continue to be vigilant in enforcing civil rights laws, dealing with inter-group conflict and neighborhood disputes, and hearing fair housing complaints. There are so many wonderful people in this City committed to equal rights that we partner with throughout the year. Once again. we congratulate those individuals that were recognized at our 2006 Human Rights Award Luncheon.

Sincerely,

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

Ralph E. Blanks
Chairperson
Philadelphia Fair
Commission

W. Nick Taliaferro
Executive Director

The City of Philadelphia
Commission on Human Relations
Fair Housing Commission
34 South 11th Street, 6th Floor
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John F. Street, Esq.
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 William I. Kuhn; Juan Ortiz, Jr.; Harold L. Rush

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

Staff

Administration: Jackie Henry, *Deputy Director*; Liz Bunkowski; Angela DeShields; Jack Fingerman; Dallice Thomas; Adrienne Trice; Barry Williams

Compliance Division: Rachel Lawton, *Deputy Director*; Joseph Farley, *Supervisor*; Paulette Banks; Rosemary Branigan; Carolyn Collins; Sophia Geyfetsman; Denise Benrahou; Bernard Bivens; Matthew Cowell; Wilma Holmes, *Supervisor*; Rhonda Kitchen; David Martini; Deborah Rudbarg; Roderick Washington; Michele White

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

Fair Housing: Gael Mahan, *Supervisor*; San Chin, Vivian Gray, Brenda Madera

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 34 S. 11th Street, 6th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Visit the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations' web site at <http://www.phila.gov/humanrelations> and the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission's web site at <http://www.phila.gov/fairhousing>. The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations and the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission would like to thank residents, the business community, government agencies, and partners for their continuing interest and 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.

The Central Intake Unit

Staff of 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.

A client is referred to the appropriate agency if his or her concern is not within the jurisdiction of either the PCHR or the PFHC.

<i>Central Intake Services</i>	
Telephone Interviews	
Fair Housing	467
General Inquiries/Referrals...	370
Compliance.....	821
Community Relations.....	508
Total.....	2,166
Office Interviews	
Fair Housing	179
General Inquiries/Referrals	438
Compliance.....	506
Community Relations.....	204
Total.....	1,327
Written Inquiries on Services.....	82

Registration of Life Partners

Since the enactment of domestic partnership legislation in Philadelphia on May 19, 1998, the PCHR has been responsible for registering same-sex couples in Philadelphia.

Since 1998, 496 same-sex couples have registered their relationship with the PCHR.

The domestic 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. The amendment prohibits discrimination based on marital status in employment, housing, city services, and public accommodations.
- *Life Partners* of city employees became eligible for benefits under the city's various employee benefit plans.
- Allowed 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*.

<i>Life Partnership Registrations</i>	
Year	Number
1998	68
1999	84
2000	52
2001	55
2002	52
2003	46
2004	58
2005	40
2006	41
Total	496

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 296 complaints, resolved 379 complaints and recovered \$637,562.72 in damages for 60 complainants in 2006. The complaints were in the areas listed in the box on the right.

Area	Docketed	Resolved
Employment	256	332
Housing	18	26
Public Accom.	18	17
City Services	4	4
Total	296	379

Complaint Highlights

A disabled female complainant alleged that a respondent subjected her to sexual harassment, and when she reported the matter to management, she was retaliated against in that she was removed from the work schedule and subsequently terminated without being given a reason; all on account of her sex (sex harassment) and/or disability and/or perceived disability and/or retaliation for opposing practices forbidden by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. During the continued investigation, The respondent agreed to pay the complainant accepted \$34,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A disabled male complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by failing and/or refusing to address his concerns after he reported to management that he was being subjected by his students to ongoing harassment regarding his perceived sexual orientation, retaliating against him in that he was falsely accused of insubordination as well as violating other policies, recommending that he be discharged and subsequently terminating him for violating work policies; all on account of his disability and/or perceived disability and/or perceived sexual orientation and/or retaliation for opposing practices forbidden by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. Subsequent to a fact finding conference, the parties agreed in exchange for the withdrawal of the charge, the complainant would receive 4 months of salary (\$16,000) with full medical benefits for the same period and a neutral job reference.

*

A Hispanic complainant alleged that she was discriminated against by her landlord on the basis of national origin and/or ancestry because the rent of her apartment was at a higher monthly rate than the rate of two non-Hispanic tenants who moved into similar apartments around the same time or after she moved in. The landlord denied discriminating against the tenant and agreed to pay her \$1,500 for moving expenses to settle the complaint.

A black complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by harassing and humiliating her, and subsequently terminating her for alleged infractions while not terminating white employees for similar infractions, all because of her race and/or color and/or in retaliation for opposing practices forbidden by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. The respondent, which since the complainant was filed declared bankruptcy and closed, denied discriminating against the employee. The respondent agreed to pay the complainant \$46,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her on the basis of sex (sexual harassment) and/or retaliation for opposing practices forbidden by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance by subjecting her to sexual harassment by her male immediate supervisor, and when she resisted his sexual advances, she was retaliated against in that she was terminated for alleged performance problems. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to a field investigation or a fact-finding conference, the complainant accepted from the respondent \$15,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A black complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her because of her race and/or color by accusing her of violating the company's sick abuse policy, thus terminating her even though she provided medical certificates to confirm her illness, yet failing to discipline and/or terminate similarly situated white co-workers, all because of her race and/or color. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. After the field investigation and prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the respondent and the complainant agreed to a mutually amicable settlement agreement (\$27,434.40).

*

A black female complainant who is disabled alleged that her employer discriminated against her by denying her high profile projects that similarly situated white male employees received to showcase their ability for advancement opportunities, denying the complainant the opportunity to work from home when similarly situated employees who are not disabled are allowed to work from home, and insulting and belittling her when she requested assistance from the respondent with regard to reviews, all because of her race and/or color and/or disability. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to a fact finding conference, the complainant and respondent reached an amicable agreement with the complainant receiving a neutral reference and \$25,000 in exchange for the complainant's voluntary resignation and agreeing not to apply for any further positions with the respondent or any of its affiliates.

*

A complainant, who had filed previous charges of discrimination, alleged that the respondent discriminated against him by putting him on probation and telling him that he had to improve his job performance in 90 days or he would be terminated; all because he opposed practices prohibited by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance (retaliation). The employer denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to the completion of the investigation, the complainant indicated that he wished to retire from the respondent, who offered to pay him six months severance in addition to his pension if he retired by August 1, 2006. The complainant, whose salary is \$89,380, accepted the respondent's proposal.

*

A black complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by harassing and subsequently terminating him because of his race and/or color and/or retaliation for opposing practices prohibited by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. After a fact finding conference and prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the respondent agreed to pay the complainant \$10,000 to settle the complaint.

A disabled complainant, who previously filed a sexual harassment complaint with the respondent, alleged that her employer harassed her, failed to accommodate her and consequently terminated her and later rescinded a new offer of employment; all because of her disability and/or retaliation. The employer denied discriminating against the employee.

Prior to conducting a complete investigation, the complainant and the respondent agreed to resolve this matter for \$3,500 and 29 months of health benefits for the complainant.

*

A black complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her in the workplace by treating her differently than non-black employees and by terminating her employment because of her race and/or retaliation for opposing practices prohibited by the Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. Subsequent to a fact finding conference, the respondent agreed to pay the complainant \$5,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A disabled/perceived disabled complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by harassing her, creating a hostile work environment, assigning more clients than mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, treating her differently than other younger non-disabled similarly situated employees; and terminating her all because of her age and/or disability/perceived disability. The employer denied discriminating against the employee.

Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the complainant and respondent agreed to a mutually satisfactory settlement in which the complainant received \$2,000 to settle the complaint.

*

A black, age 70, disabled female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her by harassing her about attending meetings and threatening her with termination, and subsequently terminating her all because of her race, age, and/or disability. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to the completion of the investigation, the respondent offered and the complainant accepted a settlement of one year's salary at 20 hours per week, \$5.15 per hour (\$5,360) to settle the complaint.

*

A disabled complainant alleged that his employer discrimination against him by refusing him reasonable accommodations, thereby forcing him to work under conditions harmful to his health, all because of his disability and/or perceived disability. The employer denied discriminating against the employee.

While the investigation was under review, the respondent paid the complainant his retirement monies of approximately \$40,000 and lost wages of \$2,100.

*

A black complainant alleged that his employer discriminated against him by harassing him because of his ethnic hairstyle, reducing his work hours and unfairly terminating him, all because of his race. The employer denied discriminating against the employee.

The respondent offered the complainant a settlement of eight weeks pay for 30 hours a week at \$8.50 an hour, (\$2,040) which he accepted.

*

A female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her on the basis of sex (sexual harassment) when the owner and another similarly situated male, together, sexually harassed her, which, thereby, forced her to quit. The employer denied discriminating against the employee. A finding of probable cause was made. After a conciliation meeting was held with the respondent, a settlement agreement was reached between the complainant and the respondent, whereby the respondent would pay the complainant \$7,750 as settlement of the complaint.

Complaints Docketed by Basis				
Basis	Employ.	Housing	Pub. Acc.	City Serv.
Race/Color	126	4	9	1
Religion	31	0	0	0
Nat. Origin/ Ancestry	30	2	3	0
Sex	75	5	3	1
Sex Harr.	27	3	1	0
Sex Orien.	14	4	2	1
Gend. Iden.	3	0	1	0
Disability	51	2	4	0
Age	31	1	Not Covered	0
Mar. Status	1	0	0	0
Retaliation	62	1	Not Covered	2
Sou. of Inc.	Not Covered	1	Not Covered	Not Covered
Pre. Of Chil.	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.

*

A black complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her because of her race and/or color and/or retaliation by subjecting her to abusive and hostile treatment in the workplace, while not subjecting white employees to such treatment and by terminating her employment when it was discovered that she had filed a discrimination complaint because of this treatment. The respondent denied discriminating against the employee. Subsequent to a fact finding conference, the respondent offered and the complainant accepted \$1,350 to settle the complaint.

*

A female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her on the basis of sex (sexual harassment) by refusing to address her concerns after she reported a serious incident of sexual harassment to respondent owners, who then attempted to transfer her to a less desirable worksite in order to resolve the issue, which ultimately compelled her to resign. The respondent denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to a field investigation, the respondent agreed and the complainant accepted \$3,500 to settle the complaint.

*

A black female complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her on account of race and/or color

Complaints Resolved by Basis				
Basis	Employ.	Housing	Pub. Acc.	City Serv.
Race/Color	162	9	9	2
Religion	20	0	3	0
Nat. Origin/ Ancestry	41	1	4	4
Sex	94	4	1	0
Sex Harr.	27	3	1	0
Sex Orien.	14	6	0	0
Gend. Iden.	1	1	0	0
Disability	89	7	3	0
Age	57	1	Not Covered	0
Mar. Status	0	0	0	0
Retaliation	94	3	Not Covered	0
Sou. of Inc.	Not Covered	2	Not Covered	Not Covered
Pre. Of Chil.	Not Covered	1	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.

*

and/or sex by giving her a “needs improvement” performance evaluation after she performed work in a new position at their request, thus forcing her to resign and by denying her “at risk” vacation pay, while granting such pay to a white male employee who retired. The respondent denied discriminating against the employee. Prior to a fact finding conference, the respondent agreed to pay and the complainant accepted \$1,953, provide her with a neutral letter of reference and remove her performance evaluation from her personnel file to settle the complaint.

*

A black complainant alleged that her employer discriminated against her because of her race and/or color by telling her that she did not meet its performance criteria without providing her with any specifics regarding the manner in which her performance was measured, terminating her for performance issues and subsequently replacing her with a white employee. The respondent denied discriminating against the employee.

Prior to making a final determination in this matter, the complainant agreed to accept a severance package, consisting of \$23,027.88 offered by the respondent as a full and final resolution of the complaint.

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

<i>Community Relations Division Services</i>	
	Number
Dispute Resolution Cases	433
Individual Contacts	6,433
Meetings	180
Workshops	24
Resource Requests	912
Inter-group Incidents	38
Individual Contacts	2,344
Meetings	101
Workshops	6
Resource Requests	282
Prevention Activities Cases	76
Individual Contacts	3,039
Meetings	187
Workshops	25
Resource Requests	1,155
Educational Activities	
Individual Contacts	2,196
Meetings	91
Workshops	15
Resource Requests	1,187
Participants at Educational Workshops.....	2,106
Technical Assistance Projects.....	27
Resource Development Projects.....	60
Formal Mediations.....	44
Informal Mediations.....	106
Center City Intakes.....	178
North Phila. Intakes.....	304

mediation is to provide disputants with skills that enable them to resolve the conflict themselves.

The DRP provides formal mediation sessions that are 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 services are offered to:

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

They are 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.

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.
- Act as go-between for as long as needed until all of the parties come to a working resolution.

Community Relations Division Activities

SCHOOL/NEIGHBORS DISPUTE

Children of a parochial elementary school (grades 1-8), located in the same Fishtown site for over 100 years, always had their recess on the small alley/street behind the school. The neighborhood had been stable - two, three, four generations - for many years, but with recent gentrification, new neighbors moved in. Several years ago, given the complaints of some neighbors, one of the priests agreed to stop doing this - primarily because the number of students had been drastically reduced. However, in the next few years, and then, with the planned merger of another school, the number of students increased dramatically. The school resumed recess in this street and the neighbors protested. The school asked the 26th Community Relations Officer to visit with the neighbors who were protesting the recess because the 26th Police District had put up barriers on the street. But the neighbors felt that the police were taking the school's side and were adversarial to them, and there had been some negative interactions with the school parents, so PCHR was contacted. There was particular concern because the school's enrollment was set to double that coming fall (from about 100 kids to about 200).

PCHR staff met individually, over time, with the police, school principal and staff, crossing guards, home/school association leaders, businesses in the area, and neighbors on the street. Staff convened several meetings of the school administration, police, home/school and neighbors at which all sides presented their concerns and explored all possibilities. The group discussed supervision, boundaries, noise, etc. Staff, police, school administration, and the neighbors walked the neighborhood to determine the feasibility and safety of the alternatives. The neighbors were intractable, but open to all dialogue and working to find and support an alternative solution. The principal was accommodating and the police were actively involved in supporting a solution that would involve the larger street (with a much wider sidewalk) in front of the school that would allow for half of the students to have recess for 20 minutes while the other half had lunch, and then visa versa. This required a commitment on the part of the police to come every day and block off the traffic to that block for a total of 40 minutes to ensure the safety of the children - which they did. The home/school worked to advise the neighbors on the street and the neighbors worked to support this resolution in the larger community. Once the new students arrived and this resolution was in place, there were no reported problems. The teachers at the school successfully worked to ensure that the students did not take advantage of this opportunity and respected the neighbors' properties during recess. The third grade teacher at the school had her students make paper Pilgrims with candles and put one on each of the neighbors' steps in appreciation for being able to use the street for recess play.

NEIGHBOR-NEIGHBOR DISPUTE

Neighbor A alleged that *Neighbor B* is constantly having parties every weekend. *Neighbor A* further alleged that *Neighbor B* blasted music throughout the night and that every night there are about 5-10 teenagers gathering on the steps smoking. *Neighbor A* has a heart condition and hasn't been able to rest due to the parties. *Neighbor A* stated he has called the police several times, but *Neighbor B's* behavior continued, which has included sitting on the steps smoking marijuana and drinking beer. *Neighbor A* wants *Neighbor B* to be considerate and cooperate in resolving the dispute. PCHR staff contacted *Neighbor B* regarding the allegations. *Neighbor B* admitted that sometimes he has played loud music and his mother may have a drink after work. *Neighbor B* stated that no one sits on the steps, except kids from across the street. *Neighbor B* alleged that *Neighbor A* cursed the family in Spanish, banged on the walls at all hours, was disrespectful, and played loud music which prevented her from studying for her GED. PCHR staff called *Neighbor A* who denied *Neighbor B's* allegations of disrespect, loud music, etc. *Neighbor A's* wife also denied the allegations and stated that *Neighbor B* was exaggerating. *Neighbor A* stated that he had been approached *Neighbor B*, who asked him if "everything is all-right?" but this was before he filed the complaint. Right now, the *Neighbor B* still plays loud music, but not as much, and no one is sitting on the steps because of the weather. *Neighbor A* will report to PCHR staff of any changes in this situation.

SPRAYING WATER DISPUTE

Neighbor C watered her flowers when *Neighbor D* accused her of spraying water into her yard. Both *Neighbor C* and *Neighbor D* called the police. *Neighbor C's* daughter filed a Criminal Complaint against *Neighbor D* last year. *Neighbor C* stated that *Neighbor D* accused her of putting a rat in front her house. *Neighbor C* alleged that *Neighbor D* is constantly threatening to blow up her daughter's house. *Neighbor C* reported that *Neighbor D* has lived next door to her for over two years, and has not had any problems. *Neighbor C* lives alone, is a widow and her daughter lives across the street. *Neighbor C* stated that a cat probably threw the rat on her neighbor's property and added that *Neighbor D* installed a cast iron/wooden fence next to her. *Neighbor C* claimed that one day she was cleaning her yard and cast iron/wooden fence just to be nice, but *Neighbor D* looked out the window and proceeded to holler at her and called police. *Neighbor C* has two plants hanging from her clothesline poles and does not understand why that would bother her neighbor. PCHR staff met both parties in their homes. *Neighbor C* showed PCHR staff the backyard fence that she wets when cleaning the yard. *Neighbor D* alleged that she had purchased the home that she believes *Neighbor C* wanted her son to buy, and this could be *Neighbor C's* main problem with her. *Neighbor D's* backyard has a low iron fence, so she decided to install the six-foot fence for privacy and to avoid the water coming from *Neighbor C's* backyard. *Neighbor D* believes her neighbor does this intentionally and constantly looks into her home. *Neighbor C* denied she is wetting the fence intentionally and denied that her son ever wanted to buy *Neighbor D's* home. With PCHR's intervention, *Neighbor C* agreed to cooperate with *Neighbor D* as much as she can. The neighbors reported that there were no further problems between them.

NOISE DISPUTE

The 26th Police District Community Relations Officer requested PCHR assistance with a neighborhood dispute with possible racial overtones. *Neighbor E*, black male, alleges that *Neighbor F* and her boyfriend, white female/white male, has harassed him and tried to intimidate him because they allege he makes too much noise and has made allegations that he is a drug dealer and a thief. *Neighbor E* alleged that neighbors believe it is racial, but no ethnic slurs were used. *Neighbor E* is a renter and *Neighbor F* is a long-time homeowner. Both parties indicated that they have not used racial slurs, although *Neighbor E* believes it is "racial." The block is mixed and has been for at least two decades. Staff spoke to the landlord who indicated that *Neighbor E* is behind in rent. Staff has provided both parties with information on the Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee (PMBC) block captains program (there is no current block captain) and a PMBC representative has provided them with block captain's petition. Things quieted down for a few months then started up again - basically allegations by *Neighbor E* that *Neighbor F* is disparaging him by reporting drug and other alleged disruptive/loud activity to police and local civic association. *Neighbor E* now has a camera facing the back yard of *Neighbor F's* home, where *Neighbor E* alleged that the activities took place. Staff has counseled all parties in the case. The conflict appears to be based on life-styles and personalities, not race. There have been no further requests for PCHR services. PCHR staff will continue to monitor the situation.

Forum for Providers of Services to Philadelphia Immigrants and Refugees

(Excerpts of PCHR testimony on June 7, 2006 before City Council's Committee on Commerce and Economic Development regarding Resolution 060293 and the call to explore the issue of immigration in Philadelphia.)

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.

PCHR plans to review all the testimony, the recommendations, make appropriate referrals and assist in improving the network of services and communication to the immigrant and refugee communities in Philadelphia.

Not to be ignored in the process is the understanding of the needs of receiving communities and schools into which immigrants come to live.

They need to be linked closely together in services and development to help build strong inclusive neighborhoods that do not feel threatened or in competition with newcomers.

As some Philadelphia residents have left the city over the years for the suburbs, we have been fortunate to have immigrants from all over the world come to Philadelphia to live and pursue their American dream. Their success is intricately tied to our collective success economically, culturally and socially. And all of our children will benefit as their horizons are broadened by

new neighbors who will help them professionally as they enter and compete in the growing global economy. *(Photo credit: Dick Gouldey, City Photographer.)*



Meetings

Staff attended the Maryland Mediation Convention. The convention offered workshops and trainings on various skills in mediation and community services. Several hundreds professionals and community leaders from surrounding states attended the convention. The experiences obtained from this training will be useful for plans to organize a similar project in Philadelphia.

*

Staff attended a City Commissioner's community awards ceremony. The Office of the City Commissioner presented awards to several outstanding community members for their services to the residents of Philadelphia. Staff attended the ceremony to show support for the honorees.

*

Staff attended a community meeting of the Pan Asian Association. The meeting was part of the group's monthly meeting to address issues concerning their constituents. The PCHR affiliates with this organization and various groups in the city to learn about their issues and to network with others.

*

Staff attended a community meeting organized by the Cambodian Temple in Olney. The Temple was planning to organize a community event in April 2007. Staff provided the group with help in obtaining a city permit for street closing and introducing them to the Community Relations Officer of the 35th Police District.

*

Staff attended a Town Hall Meeting on education organized by the Office of the City Commissioner. The meeting was organized for citizens to raise their concerns and suggestions on education and related issues to the newly formed Commissioners. Staff was there as an observer and to network with other leaders.

*

Staff attended the South Philadelphia Stakeholders Meeting at South Philadelphia High School. The meeting addressed issues and concerns that South Philadelphia residents are facing.

*

Staff attended a Victim Witnesses Services of South Philadelphia board meeting. Issues discussed included crimes in South Philadelphia, the group's funding situation, and fund-raising.

*

Staff attended a Haddington/Cobbs Creek Community Development Corporation (CDC) meeting at Sayre High School. This is a well-established group that gets together monthly to discuss the development needs of the two neighborhoods.

*

Staff attended a Southwest Division's Police and Clergy meeting. Mediation techniques were demonstrated and shared with the group. Free mediation services were also offered for their members and neighbors.

*

Staff attended a meeting titled "*Creating Community through Collaboration*" at International House Philadelphia. The meeting, sponsored by the Welcoming Center, concerned immigrants and long-term neighborhood residents and the issues around creating strong communities. Keynote speaker was Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and former United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights.

Latino Partnership Initiative

The CRD Staff is a member of the Latino Partnership Initiative (LPI) Steering Committee. Formed in 1995, the goal of the LPI is to identify and develop solutions for issues that disproportionately affect the Latino community in Philadelphia.

By raising awareness and activism, LPI hopes to empower the Latino community by addressing some issues that may affect them including alcoholism, drug addiction and poverty.

LPI is a community driven process that promotes coalition building, increased awareness and action.

The CRD Staff is working on The Coalition for Latino-American Migrants and Immigrants, whose mission is to promote an environment of supportive services to the Spanish-speaking immigrant community through advocacy and networking.

In addition, the Coalition worked on the development of:

- A curriculum for training Philadelphia police officers on Latino cultural diversity;
- A city resource booklet written in Spanish for immigrants new to Philadelphia;
- A wallet-size card written in Spanish for immigrants detailing how to respond when stopped by the police and a description of the justice process; and
- A press release warning the Latino immigrants of the different people who are presently fraudulently promising legalization, green cards, jobs, and social security cards to the community, creating false hope and defrauding the Mexican community.

Outreach to Mexican-Americans

The PCHR recognized that Mexican-Americans were one of the Philadelphia's newest groups and organized an outreach effort to understand the needs of this fast growing community.

One part of this effort is to establish working relationships with several organizations that are dealing with issues of concern to Mexican-Americans. The PCHR staff is working in partnership with the Latino Immigrant Coalition in an outreach effort to this group.

As a result of this first step, the PCHR staff is getting to know in what neighborhoods members of this group are living, what concerns they have and the identity of their leaders.

The PCHR will continue to assist these new residents report any instances of discrimination and to access services that they need.

Interfaith Walk For Peace Brings Together Peoples Of All Faiths and Cultures

The PCHR was an active partner in the Third Annual Philadelphia Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation on June 4th.

The event provided an opportunity for Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus and anyone else to walk together from a mosque, to a Roman Catholic church, to an Episcopal church, past Independence Mall, and then to a synagogue, thereby honoring each other's traditions and sacred spaces.

The Walk began at Al-Aqsa Mosque (1501 Germantown Avenue) with a gathering and a ritual program. It then proceeded to St. Peter's Church (5th Street and Girard Avenue), to Christ Church (2nd Street above Market Street), to Independence Mall (6th and Market Streets), and then to Society Hill Synagogue (5th and Spruce Streets).

The Walk was not intended as a political rally or march (no political banners permitted), but as a spiritual journey, a time for encounter, sharing and prayer.

The event's statement of values expresses: *"The true pathway to peace is God's desire for love and justice. As we walk we will lament war and the loss of life. We will pray for the safety and freedom of all people. We will embrace hope, not fear. Join us to show that peace between people of all faiths is possible. Let us call out Salaam. Let us call out Shalom. Let us call out Peace in the language of Love."*



Walking (Photos credit: Edd Conboy)



Together



For Peace



And Harmony



The Interagency Civil Rights Task Force

The PCHR is a partner of The Interagency Civil Rights Task Force. The Task Force consists of two groups. One group, made up of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, shares information about hate crimes and establishes closer working relationships within the law enforcement community.

The other group includes representatives of non-governmental agencies. This group strengthens connections among private and public agencies. This is critical to addressing issues that are related to inter-group conflict. In part because of the established relationships and the sharing of information among Task Force members, law enforcement successfully prosecuted perpetrators of several hate crimes. The Task Force is considered to be a model by other regions of the country.

AFRICOM Empowers the African Refugee and Immigrant Community

The PCHR was part of the process to form The Coalition of African Communities – Philadelphia (AFRICOM) in the fall of 2000. Staff developed mediation training to ease tension between the various groups with long histories of conflict and animosity. The organization is still in the developing stages and on the brink of being effective in the city. The following is a list of member organizations, the mission statement of *AFRICOM* and examples of the concerns of most communities as expressed by the Sudanese community.

1. Iwina Publications – *The HERITAGE*
2. North America Mandigo Association
3. Eritrean Community of Philadelphia
4. Pan African Catholic Association
5. Reel Voices
6. African Family Health Organization
7. Haitian Association
8. African Cultural Alliance of North America
9. Sudanese Association Ga-Adangbe (Ghanaian) Association
10. Ga-Adangbe (Ghanaian) Association
11. African Cultural and Guinean Association
12. Somalian Association
13. Senegalese Association
14. Association des Femmes Ivoiriennes de Philadelphie (AFIP)

The mission of the Coalition of African Communities – Philadelphia is to empower the African and refugee immigrant communities by:

- Facilitating family access to health and social services, with special focus on women, children and youth.
- Promoting economic development.
- Facilitating the resolution of inter- and intra-group conflicts.

PCHR Staff Served as Evaluator at PA National Guard Mediation Training

The PCHR staff served as an evaluator and observer during training of Pennsylvania National Guard personnel. The U.S. Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) presented this equal employment opportunity mediation course. The training was held in Lebanon, PA and involved approximately 30 students.

The training included a full day of practice that involved the PCHR staff coaching and observing groups of student mediators as they worked through numerous equal opportunity dispute scenarios. The student practicum filled day two. Staff evaluated and graded student mediator competencies as a final requirement toward certification with the DEOMI.

Formal Mediation Resulted in Agreement to Settle Dispute

In a cooperative effort with a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Property Manager, the PCHR staff is facilitating formal mediations among tenants of Larchwood Gardens Apartments in Southwest Philadelphia.

The mediations allow disputants a neutral venue and format to air their grievances with their neighbors. The parties worked toward settlement of dispute issues and discuss new behaviors that will promote healthier relationships. Each participant receives a copy of the resulting agreement as a solid guideline for relating to one another in a peaceful manner.

The arrangement assists the HUD Property Manager in resolving problems among her tenants. It also enables participants to bring about positive change without police or court intervention.

Mediation through Church and Deacon

Two neighbors wanted their church to intercede in a contentious dispute. Both parties felt that it was important to have PCHR staff act as mediator. The PCHR staff contacted the church and offered assistance, which the Deacon graciously accepted.

The two disputants met with the PCHR staff and the Deacon at their church. The 3½-hour process involved a very creative process of combining formal mediation with the Deacon's biblical counseling.

The hard work of this session ended on a positive note as the disputants hugged each other. The Deacon led all in a final prayer and then the two neighbors drove home together, stopping for pizza on the way.

The PCHR staff then sent a "thank you" note to the Deacon with an open-ended offer to provide the assistance of the PCHR to him and his congregation whenever the need arose.

PCHR Honors Community Activists at Annual Human Rights Awards Luncheon

The Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR) honored 16 community leaders and organizations at its Annual Human Rights Awards Luncheon on October 14 in the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

"These wonderful people of goodwill made a commitment to themselves and their communities to reach beyond the comfortable lines of their own ethnic or religious backgrounds to build bridges of understanding and the many different groups that make up our great city," said James S. Allen, Sr., Chairperson of the Commission.

"It has been said that those things that we keep best, are those things that we celebrate most," said Nick Taliaferro, PCHR Executive Director. "Over the years we have endorsed that maxim by continuing to come together to celebrate the many contributions of some of Philadelphia's most civic-minded citizens. And in doing so, we help to create a living legacy of all that is best about residing in a large metropolitan setting, and we preserve the great acts of kindness and justice that reminds us of what we can be at our best."

Suzanne Roberts, creator and host, Comcast Cable's *Seeking Solutions with Suzanne*, received the PCHR Clarence Farmer Service Award for building understanding and being a role model of graceful aging as she provides both boomers and seniors' information and insight on ways to enrich their lives, expand their horizons, and improve their health on the Emmy award winning "Seeking Solutions with Suzanne" cable-TV program.

In addition, the PCHR Human Rights Award in Law Enforcement was renamed the **P/O Gary Skerski Award for Meritorious Service** and will be given annually to members of the law enforcement community who demonstrate the traits of character and service that are part of the legacy of Officer



Rev. James S. Allen, Sr., (right) PCHR Chairperson, presents the Clarence Farmer Service Award to Suzanne Roberts. U.S. Congressman Chaka Fattah looks on. (Photo credit: Hector Valentin, City Photographer.



Mayor John F. Street presents the city's Human Relations



Month proclamation to Rev. James S. Allen, Sr., PCHR Sister Mary Scullion, Executive Director, Project H. O. M. E., gives the invocation.

Skerski, and also a part of the history of the Philadelphia Police Department. The first **PIO Gary Skerski Award for Meritorious Service** was presented to Mrs. Anne Skerski, in honor of her late husband's legacy of improving inter-group harmony in the City of Philadelphia.

The **PCHR Chairperson's Award** was presented to **The Philadelphia Comprehensive Center for Fathers (PCCF)**, a comprehensive service and support center that serves participants from all social backgrounds and ethnicities, and exposes fathers to educational and/or training opportunities. Under the leadership of Executive Director, Kofe Asante, and Arthur Henry James, Program Manager, Legal Services Program, PCCF was established in 2004 in collaboration with the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition. The Legal Services Program is the only legal services program in Pennsylvania designed specifically for and providing services to men in civil, family, traffic, and criminal law.

The **PCHR Human Rights Award for Corporate Responsibility** was presented to **The Philadelphia Eagles** for improving the lives of children and for bringing together young adults from diverse backgrounds for challenging and rewarding community service through the Eagles Youth Partnership.

The **PCHR Human Rights Award for Arts & Culture** was presented to **International House Philadelphia**, a multicultural center that maintains a diverse and welcoming community for scholars from around the world, and broadens the horizons of its residents and the larger community through programs and arts to promote international friendship. Founded in 1910, International House houses nearly 400 students, scholars and interns from over 65 countries,

The **PCHR Human Rights Award for Community Service** was presented to **Navy Ros**, Youth Program Coordinator of the Summer Career Exploration Program at the Cambodian Association who has worked to provide Khmer and Asian youth an opportunity to advance themselves through educational initiatives and career related training and internships that are designed for students to learn more about different races, cultures, religions, and age groups; **Mark A. Davis**, a Behavioral Health



Mrs. Anne Skerski accepts the first PIO Gary Skerski Award for Meritorious Service. Chief Inspector James Tiano offers congratulations.



Emcee Lori Wilson, NBC 10s "10!" extends greetings.



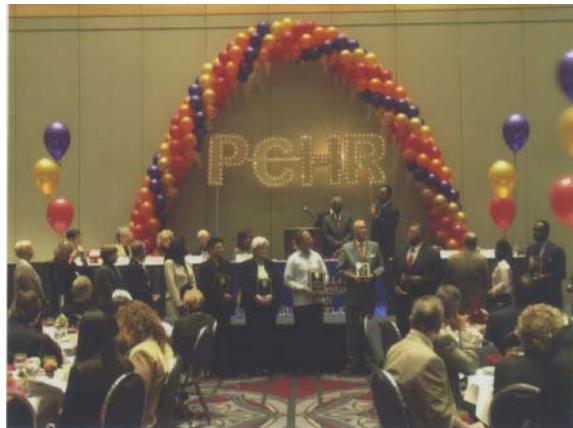
Clifton Davis, Grammy and Tony award nominee. sings a tribute to the honorees

System Special Needs Analyst for the Philadelphia Mental Health Care Corporation who volunteers his time reaching out to others in the LGBT community; **Gregorio Pac Cojulun**, who assists the Philadelphia Police and the University of Pennsylvania Police in reducing crime while working closely with city agencies and diverse community groups; and **Bilal Qayyum**, Coordinator of Economic Development for the Philadelphia Department of Commerce, co-chairman of Men United for a Better Philadelphia and founder of the annual Father's Day Rally in Fairmount Park. Bilal has recruited men (and women) from all faiths and races to join his cause.

The PCHR Professional in Human Rights Award was presented to **Sandra Bacote** who served as Regional Director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission from 1976 to 2005, directing a staff of 50 persons to investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination under the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act; and **Edward McCaffrey** who is retiring this year from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), after serving 35 years as a Program Analyst enforcing civil rights laws in employment.

The PCHR Human Rights Award to a Nonprofit Organization was presented to **The Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations (Concilio)** for working tirelessly to promote inter-group understanding about Spanish-speaking persons from different countries and for striving to bring equality to all immigrant groups; **The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians** for promoting immigrant participation in the area's political, social and economic life through strategic relationship building with a broad-based coalition of ethnic community-based organizations.

Other groups receiving the PCHR Human Rights Award to a Nonprofit Organization included **Philadelphia Futures For Youth (Philadelphia Futures)** for its Sponsor-A-Scholar program which helps students from economically disadvantaged families to succeed in high school, and to pursue and complete higher education; **Mt. Airy USA** for launching its Neighborhood Partnership Program to meaningfully engage residents in the planning of community building strategies; and the **Mt. Airy-Nippon-Bryan-Cresheim Town Watch** for working with PCHR to mediate conflicts and for its neighbor-to-neighbor initiatives.



PCHR 2006 Human Rights Award Honorees assemble after receiving their awards



W. Nick Taliaferro, PCHR Executive Director, presents a raffle prize to a lucky winner. PCHR staff member Patricia Coyne assists in the presentation



Pastor K.S. Goodman, Senior Pastor, North Philadelphia SDA Church, offers the benediction

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 2006 Service Report	
	Number
Intakes	154
Complaints Docketed	193
Cases Prepared for Hearings	346
Cases Heard	206
Orders Mailed	452
L/T Court Letters	51
Referrals Made	660
Cases Closed and Filed	169
Contacts:	7,943
Telephone	5,702
Office Visits	710
Mail	1,325
Fax	206

Complaint Highlights

EVICTION

A landlord was attempting to evict a tenant after she had complained to L&I about lack of heat, mold and other problems in her apartment. The Fair Housing Commissioners heard the case, and issued an Order that the landlord must repair all housing code violations. The Commission instructed the tenant to continue placing her rent into the escrow account until all code violations were corrected. The landlord was then ordered to obtain a document from L&I stating that all violations were closed and to present this document to the Fair Housing Commissioners for verification.

RENT INCREASE

A new owner purchased an apartment building and was attempting to raise the rent while letting serious repair problems remain. The Fair Housing Commissioners heard the case and issued an Order stating that there shall be no rent increase unless and until all housing code violations are corrected. The landlord was told to have the apartment building reinspected by L&I after all repairs were completed and forward to the Commission a certificate verifying that no code violations remained in the building. After all code violations were corrected the landlord was free to follow the terms of each individual tenant's existing lease. At the end of the present lease's term, the new landlord could negotiate his own agreement with a tenant. Only at this time, within the new lease, could the tenant have a rent increase.

FAIR OUTCOME FOR BOTH TENANT AND LANDLORD

A tenant filed a complaint stating that L&I were evicting her while there were repair problems in her unit that had been cited. At a Fair Housing Hearing, the tenant expressed a grievance about the landlord's long-standing neglect in fixing some serious leaks. The leaks resulted in considerable damage to her belongings. The landlord blamed the delay in rectifying the problem on another tenant's behavior in an upstairs apartment where the leak originated.

The Commission awarded the Fair Housing complainant a two-month rent waiver for the inconvenience and expenses incurred due to this problem. The landlord subsequently did make all of the repairs and sent the Commission a document from L&I that stated that all of the repairs had been completed. The tenant, however, declined to comply with the Fair Housing Order, which stated that once all repairs were made she must turn over to the landlord the remaining rents, placed in escrow. An Amended Order was immediately issued by the PFHC ordering the tenant to pay the landlord the amount remaining in her escrow account.

RETALIATION

A tenant filed a complaint stating that he received a rent increase and was being evicted while there were housing code violations to his unit. The Order given at a Fair Housing Hearing allowed the tenant to place his rent in escrow until all repairs were made and L&I could document that the repairs had been completed. The Order also protected the tenant from eviction or rent increase for the period of one-year. This was based on the fact that the Commission found that the landlord had retaliated against the tenant for exercising his legal rights.

APARTMENT BUILDING

Several tenants living in the same apartment building began to put their rent into an escrow account after the city cited the building as "unfit for human habitation" and the owner raised the rent. Some tenants were also told to "get out" after they began to document the many repair problems by taking pictures. The Commission heard the case and ordered the owner of the building to correct all code violations or possibly face a fine. The tenants who joined in on the complaint were awarded three-months' rental credit for the inconveniences and hardships that they endured.

RETALIATION

A tenant filed a Fair Housing complaint claiming that his landlord was retaliating him against. The landlord threatened the tenant with eviction because he made complaints to L&I and formed a tenant council with others in the apartment building. This tenant suspected that others were suffering the same sort of hardships that he was experiencing. L&I had inspected and determined that the violations that they found were "dangerous to human life and/or the public welfare." L&I stated that the conditions "constituted an emergency." The landlord completed the repairs and submitted to the Fair Housing Commission a certificate from L&I that stated that the violations were closed. In addition, the landlord was apprised of the tenant's lawful right to file valid complaints and to form a tenant council.

OUTREACH

The Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission added a Spanish-speaking representative to its staff and provided outreach to the Associated Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Staff conducted an information seminar on what filing a complaint and explained that the Commission can make accommodations for those clients who cannot come into the office due to a disability.

Operating Budget: Fiscal Years 2005-2007 Year Ended June 30, 2006

Description	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Adopted Budget	FY 2006 Adopted Budget
Personal Services	2,106,329	1,968,676	2,090,420
Contracts / Leases	40,870	47,131	47,131
Supplies, Equipment	15,528	19,274	19,274
Total	2,162,727	2,035,081	2,156,825

Revenues Generated	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Budget
Case Closing Reimbursement	85,545	156,280	125,000

Note: The PCHR received a work-sharing contract with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate 234 complaints in federal FY 2005, for \$167,000, and in federal FY 2006, a contract to investigate 325 cases for \$175,500. The PCHR anticipates receiving a slightly different sized EEOC contract in federal FY 2007.

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's 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 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 public 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. Transgendered people 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?"

The challenges identified by participants at the roundtable discussions to doing business, both generally and specifically, were similar, and reflected concerns about taxes, banking/loan procedures, parking, appearance of neighborhoods and business district, the quality and delivery of City services, the size of a qualified labor pool, and community relationships.

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. PCHR plans to review all the testimony, the recommendations, make appropriate referrals and assist in improving the network of services and communication to the immigrant and refugee communities in Philadelphia.