

# Message From the President

Dear Friends of the Fair Housing Council:

The Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia would like to thank its many individual and corporate supporters who have made the year 2006 activities possible.

In addition special thanks to:

- The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
- Delaware County Office of Housing & Community Development
- Philadelphia Foundation

The year 2006 marked a major milestone in the Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia's history—50 years of working to insure access to justice for victims of housing discrimination. FHCSF continues to be the premier fair housing agency in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties.

FHCSF garnered unprecedented Philadelphia market media coverage of a federal fair housing lawsuit settlement involving familial status discrimination at eight apartment complexes containing 1,735 units in Chester, Montgomery, and Lancaster Counties. This settlement brings the total number of housing units FHCSF has opened to members of the protected classes to an astounding 46,228 and the monetary damages recovered for victims of housing discrimination to \$1,431,366.

2006 marked the first year of a three year HUD contract to conduct systemic housing investigations in the region. FHCSF was one of only 13 groups in the nation HUD determined were entitled to receive performance based funding because of our track record of being a "high performing" fair housing enforcement agency.

Reflecting on FHCSF 50<sup>th</sup> year as an organization dedicated to the mission of promotion

equal housing to all regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, familial status, or disability it is clear that we have been able to garner the respect of our peer both locally and nationally. The credit for our success should be given to the dedicated staff, who are relentless in their efforts to insure equality in housing. FHCSF remains the only full service fair housing agency in southeastern Pennsylvania.

As President of the Board of Directors, I have been honored to work with the Fair Housing Council's dedicated staff and board members. Unfortunately, despite our efforts, complaints of housing discrimination are at an all time high in the Philadelphia region. We enter 2007 with determination to develop more sophisticated methods to uncover housing discrimination and to promote fair housing in our communities. We are extremely grateful for the confidence and support of our members and of the governmental and private entities that allow us to continue this important work. Thank you,

Carolyn E. Johnson, Esquire  
President, Board of Directors

**Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia  
Statement of Activities  
Year Ended December 31, 2005\***

<b>Revenues &amp; Support</b>	
Government Contracts	\$731,099
Grants	\$17,500
Contributions	\$31,086
Training sessions and conferences	\$2,200
Total Revenues and Support	\$781,885
<b>Expenses</b>	
Compensation	\$170,745
Conferences	\$4,019
Consultants	\$422,812
Copying & Printing	\$14,873
Depreciation	\$2,337
Employee Benefits	\$1,387
Employee Travel	\$6,342
Fundraising Expense	\$926
In-kind	\$25,750
Insurance	\$500
Litigation	\$2,504
Memberships, Contrib. & fees	\$1,955
Office Supplies	\$3,099
Payroll Taxes	\$13,485
Postage	\$5,674
Professional Fees	\$4,465
Proposals	\$10,414
Rent	\$20,888
Repairs & Maintenance	\$1,680
Retirement Plan	\$6,898
Telephone	\$5,787
Testing	\$14,126
Training	\$1,054
Utilities	\$2,443
Total Expenses	\$744,154
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$37,731</b>
<b>Net Assets—January 1, 2005</b>	<b>\$71,472</b>
<b>Net Assets—December 31, 2005</b>	<b>\$109,203</b>

\*This is an audited income statement as of December 31, 2005. The Council's financial records are audited yearly. A final audited Statement of Activities for the year 2006 will be available by July 2007.

to indicate that it will make reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford persons with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling, including making an exception to its "no pets" policy to accommodate persons with disabilities. Finally, Top of the Ridge agreed to pay \$1,500 to FHCSF for the cost of investigating the complaint.

During 2006, FHCSF continued working with the Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI) under a Fair Housing Organizations Initiative grant from HUD to provide a variety of fair housing enforcement services in Kent, New Castle, and Sussex counties in Delaware. Over the past year, FHCSF has continued to assist CLASI in setting up both a education and outreach program and a testing program in the state of Delaware.

This year, FHCSF completed the first year of a 3-year Performance Based Funding Initiative grant from HUD. The purpose of this grant is to allow fair housing groups to implement strategic plans and develop long-term systemic investigations.

Finally, in 2006 FHCSF worked with Fairmount Ventures to develop a strategic plan. This plan lays out strategies for FHCSF to increase the number of individuals reached by FHCSF's services, more effectively address housing discrimination in the region, expand and diversify revenue sources, and develop an active and engaged board of directors.

## Message From the Executive Director

Dear Friends of the Fair Housing Council:

Although 2006 marked the Fair Housing Council's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we deliberately chose not to celebrate our half century of working to ensure that people are able to live where they choose restricted only by their desires and what they can afford. Instead, at this vital point in its history FHCSF embarked on year long strategic planning process with the goal of expanding our capacity to help address the housing needs of people disenfranchised from their right to decent, accessible, affordable housing. FHCSF articulated its vision and mission through the strategic planning process as follows:

- Vision: **Someday, everyone in the Philadelphia region will have equal opportunity to access housing of their choice.**
- Mission: **To educate and advocate for equal access to quality, affordable housing for everyone in the Philadelphia region.**

FHCSF will pursue the following four goals over the coming three years in order to work towards these vision and mission statements.

### GOALS

1. Triple the number of housing discrimination cases FHCSF resolves over a three year

period.

2. Begin to reduce the incidences of housing bias through prevention efforts that addresses systemic causes of discrimination.
3. Expand and diversify the revenue base to allow FHCSP to be less “FHIP-centered.”
4. Build a board of directors that is actively engaged in pursuing FHCSP’s success.

Established decades ago by a caring group of volunteers who took a strong stand in support of housing integration in their Delaware County communities, FHCSP has grown into a professionally run, regionally-focused organization that is highly regarded by peer organizations in the region, its national counter-parts and its salient funder, the federal government. It is known and respected within the real estate industry for its education programs.

Financial support from the members of the FHCSP, HUD, The Philadelphia Foundation and Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development provided resources to enhance FHCSP’s education, compliance and enforcement programs.

James Berry  
Executive Director

confirmed that Audubon Manor Apartments and six other complexes managed by PMMC in Montgomery, Chester, and Lancaster Counties had discriminatory policies that would not allow a family of four to live in a two bedroom apartment.

PMMC allowed the couple to remain in their apartment while litigation was ongoing. The parties agreed to a settlement in which PMMC paid \$34,224 to the Moroney’s and FHCSP. PMMC admitted no wrongdoing and changed their occupancy policy at the onset of litigation. In addition, PMMC rental agents will attend fair housing training to ensure continued compliance with the Fair Housing Act.



This year FHCSP also settled a complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development against Top of the Ridge Mobile Home Park in Bensalem, PA, for refusing to allow disabled residents to have emotional support animals as a reasonable accommodation. Through the use of testers FHCSP found that Top of the Ridge had a written policy of not allowing dogs as a reasonable accommodation except in the case of tenants who obtain dogs that have completed “special training” and who submit a detailed medical history to the manager.

To correct these violations, Top of the Ridge has agreed to not discriminate against applicants or residents because of their disability or the disability of anyone associated with them or treat persons with disabilities less favorably than others because of their disability. In addition, Top of the Ridge has agreed to change the written rules and regulations

familial status, 8 based on national origin, 5 based on gender, 3 based on religion, 5 based on age, and 12 based on protected classes not covered by the Fair Housing Act or other fair housing related issues (numbers add up to more than 97 because some complainants alleged discrimination based on multiple protected classes).



This year FHCSP settled a federal lawsuit against PPMC Management Company, Audubon Manor Apartments in West Chester, Norris Hills Apartments in Norristown, Goshen Manor Apartments in West Goshen, Highland Manor Apartments in North Coventry, Royersford Gardens in Royersford, Goshen Terrace Apartments in West Goshen, Perkiomen Apartments in Pennsburg, and Miller's Crossing in Millersville for violating the familial status provision of the federal Fair Housing Act and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. FHCSP determined, through testing, that PPMC applied occupancy policies that disparately impacted families with children.

Timothy and Christen Moroney contacted FHCSP in July 2005 after the couple received a letter from Audubon Apartments in West Chester stating that their lease would not be renewed. The Moroneys were planning on renewing their lease at the end of October at Audubon Apartments which is owned and managed by PPMC Management Company. The couple and their young child rented a two bedroom apartment in the complex and were expecting a second child. Timothy Moroney was told by Audubon Apartments that the reason for the non renewal was that the complex would only allow three individuals to live in a two bedroom unit. FHCSP investigation

## Education Report

During the past year, FHCSP's education programs were supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Delaware County Office of Housing and Urban Development, and The Philadelphia Foundation.

During 2006, FHCSP staff spoke at 13 educational events, trainings, and meetings and trained 529 individuals in Fair Housing. These educational programs included:

- Delaware County Fair Housing Task Force
- Suburban Property Management
- Lutheran Children and Family Service
- Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging Conference
- Chester Homebuyer Fair
- Catholic Social Services
- Hunters Creek Apartments
- Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania Conference

FHCSP staff also participated in the following local coalitions and task force meetings:

- Chester Partners in Homeownership
- Inclusive Communities Committee of the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
- Delaware County Fair Housing Task Force
- Don't Borrow Trouble Suburban Philadelphia
- HUD Fair Housing Working Group

This year, FHCSP continued to distribute four educational guides, including *Fair Housing: It's Your Right*, *A Fair Housing Guide for People With Disabilities*, *A Fair Housing Guide to Homeowners*

*Insurance, and Non-Discriminatory Rental Practices: A Fair Housing Guide for Landlords and Apartment Management.* In addition to guides handed out at educational events, over 4,300 guides were distributed to various organizations and individuals in the region.



In addition to the regular education programs, the FHCSF participated in a number of other noteworthy projects and events. FHCSF's newsletter, the *Delaware Valley Fair Housing News* is sent to over 4,600 government officials, housing advocates, organizations that serve members of protected classes, industry professionals, and other individuals in the five-county region.



On April 7th, during Fair Housing Month, FHCSF sponsored the Region III U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Fair Housing: It's Not an Option, It's the Law" event.

On December 12th and 13th, FHCSF sponsored a Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST training. This seminar for local officials, developers, and staff of non-profit organizations focused on technical training for achieving accessibility for persons with disabilities.



FHCSF continued to provide education to real estate agents on how to comply with the Fair Housing Act. FHCSF writes a regular column in the *Realtor® News*, a publication of the Suburban West Realtors® Association. These fair housing articles reach over 4,200 real estate industry professionals in the Delaware Valley.



Finally, an ongoing initiative this year was FHCSF's continuing participation in the Don't Borrow Trouble Suburban Philadelphia Campaign. The Don't Borrow Trouble Campaign began in the fall of 2002 as the Anti-Predatory Lending Education Initiative, a subcommittee of the Delaware County Fair Housing Task Force. The campaign involves over 30 organizations who have joined together to address predatory lending issues impacting low-and moderate-income households in the greater Philadelphia metropolitan area. In 2006, FHCSF conducted a project to determine which census tracts in the four suburban counties had the highest instance of subprime and high-interest mortgage lending. This information was provided to the Don't Borrow Trouble Campaign to assist in targeting education efforts.

## Enforcement Report

During 2006, FHCSF's enforcement program was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. FHCSF conducted enforcement activities under a Private Enforcement Initiative grant, which allowed FHCSF to continue to conduct testing in response to complaints of discrimination as well as testing random sites for compliance with the Fair Housing Act.

During 2006, FHCSF received 97 complaints of housing discrimination, a major increase from recent years. Of these, 30 complaints alleged discrimination based on disability, 21 based on race, 32 based on