

2015 Annual Report



Office of Human Rights & Human Rights Commission



HOWARD COUNTY
OFFICE OF HUMAN
RIGHTS &
HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

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Mission: The Howard County Office of Human Rights is an entity of Howard County Government that seeks to eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity and protect and promote Human Rights in the County.

Office of Human Rights & Human Rights Commission

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HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013

Allan H. Kittleman
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2015 Office of Human Rights and Human Rights Commission Annual Report



Dear Friends:

This 2015 Annual Report for the Office of Human Rights and the Human Rights Commission is an important overview of the status of civil rights in our county, as well as a celebration of the progress being made to safeguard diversity, inclusion and fairness in our community.

This past year, we witnessed new challenges that reminded us how important it is to remain dedicated and focused on creating a better Howard County for all. As residents of this diverse County, as community leaders, as parents, as role models, we need to work harder to promote acceptance and civility. I grew up with a father who was a civil rights leader and I was surrounded by many others in the movement who fought against injustice. I will continue to push for us to be better whenever and wherever I can.

I thank Reverend Dr. Barbara Sands for her efforts this first year to provide a direction for the future – one that serves everyone's interests for efficient case resolution and expanded outreach. I want Howard County to demonstrate that it is a place where everyone is valued.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allan H. Kittleman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Allan H. Kittleman

MESSAGE FROM REVERENED DR. BARBARA J. SANDS, OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Fellow Citizens:

I am pleased to present to you the 2015 Annual Report of the Office of Human Rights (OHR) and the Human Rights Commission (HRC). Our purpose is to continue to fulfill its responsibilities of addressing complaints and resolving issues of discrimination throughout Howard County by way of impartial investigation, conciliation, mediation and education. We will continue to do so with integrity and fairness.



OHR participates in many outreach activities such as: diversity forums, police recruit training, the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday celebration, fair housing workshops, hate crime summits, human trafficking seminars, and community training opportunities. Collectively, these efforts provide education and understanding to our residents and move us closer to the goal of eliminating discrimination in Howard County.

This year, OHR collaborated with other community organizations and county government agencies to strategize and galvanize efforts to recognize and intentionally work to include people of all ethnicities. These efforts resulted in the first KWANZAA celebration at the George Howard Building. Community participation was high and culturally inclusive.

The Office joined with the Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) in hosting a Religious Freedom and Inclusiveness Conference. The conference was attended by Muslims, Christians, Shiites, Jews and others. Also, OHR sponsored a Blue Hearts Campaign at the Miller Library. The Blue Heart is the national emblem honoring Human Trafficking Victims Day. Howard County residents joined with others across the nation in this celebration. Participants included Law Enforcement, Non-Profit Organizations and County Officials.

OHR recognizes the increase of racial tension nationwide and will continue to address these issues head on. The Office held "Racial Sensitivity and Inclusive" sessions with several small businesses of Howard County. The Office joined with MAHRA and sponsored 12 showings of the documentary "The New Black" by Director Yoruba Richen. The documentary tells the story of how the African-American community is grappling with the Gay Rights issue in light of the recent gay marriage movement and the fight over civil rights. Open discussions were held at the end of each session, addressing issues relating to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Allies (LGBTQ IA) and equal rights. Special efforts were made to ensure that senior citizens were honored and participated in each event.

OHR has two Commissions. Each has a student Commissioner who is active in the community and in their school. Many students applied to serve as a Commissioner. They are all academically mature and dedicated to being inclusive, racially sensitive, and work hard for Equal Rights of all citizens. All of the students, who applied, including the two who serve on the Commissions,

MESSAGE FROM REVEREND DR. BARBARA J. SANDS, OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (CONT.)

work with OHR on issues which affect student life; anti-bullying, discrimination, inclusion, understanding different cultures and living in Howard County in unity and peace. They dream of recognizing that all are of worth, all have value and each one can learn from another. OHR will continue to collaborate with the Howard County Public School System as we work with these future leaders in making a difference for a unified future.

In 2015, the Office received 113 discrimination complaints, closed 103 cases, and negotiated \$584,145 in case settlements.

OHR continues to work with the Department Of Justice, Community Relations Service in identifying additional resources which are needed but may not be available in Howard County. We will continue to look for new ways to enhance our performance to better address the needs of those seeking our services.

I would like to personally thank the Office of Human Rights staff and Commissioners for their dedication and hard work in resolving discriminatory issues within the County.

OHR is an entity of Howard County Government that seeks to eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity and protect and promote Human Rights in the County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barbara J. Sands".

Reverend Dr. Barbara J. Sands
Administrator

OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS STAFF

Administrator

Reverend Dr. Barbara J. Sands

Investigative Staff

Mary M. Campbell, Senior Investigator and Compliance Officer

Cheryl Brower, Investigator

Todd Givens, Investigator

Linda Taylor, Intake Investigator

Outreach Staff

Stephanie Chapple, Community Outreach Coordinator

Mary Toth, Community Outreach Coordinator

Administrative Staff

Evelyn Boulware, Office Manager

Kathy Darity, Administrative Assistant

MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) was established in 1975 by the County Executive and County Council and functions pursuant to the Howard County Code, Section 12.200-12.218. The responsibilities of OHR are to investigate complaints of discrimination, to resolve complaints by conference, conciliation or litigation, and to enforce the Howard County Human Rights Law. In addition, the Office serves as a catalyst in fostering attitudes and beliefs among Howard County citizens to ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity to pursue lives free of discrimination.

For the calendar year 2015, OHR investigated and issued 62 findings, closed 103 cases while 113 new cases were filed. OHR participated in community programs, as well as, cooperated with public agencies and private groups on educational programs, outreach activities and training.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

If you believe that you have experienced discrimination in Howard County, you may file a complaint with the Office of Human Rights (OHR) by completing a pre-complaint questionnaire, alleging a violation of the Howard County Code. OHR has jurisdiction in five areas of the law which include: employment, housing, public accommodation, financing and law enforcement.

To begin the process, the complainant must complete a pre-complaint questionnaire which asks for information about the alleged discriminatory incident(s). The Intake Investigator, along with the Complainant, will draft a charge of discrimination. Once the charge is signed, the case is then assigned to an Investigator for investigation.

For housing cases, complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged discrimination; for all other cases, complaints must be filed within six months of alleged discrimination.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS—A FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AGENCY

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is authorized by statute to use the services of state and local Fair Employment Practice Agencies (FEPA), like the Howard County Office of Human Rights, to assist in meeting its mandate to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA).

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) has been a FEPA designee since 1984. This is quite an honor for OHR and a confirmation of the quality of its investigative abilities. Additionally, EEOC has named the OHR as a “certified acceptance” agency. This means that OHR has consistently met the contractual requirements to EEOC’s satisfaction, and that EEOC accepts OHR’s case decisions.

Pursuant to Congressional mandate, to establish an integrated system for more expeditious resolution of employment discrimination charges, the EEOC has committed itself to continued development and enhancement of such a system in partnership with FEPAs, such as the Howard County Office of Human Rights.

2015 TOTAL CASELOAD ANALYSIS

The following tables provide a statistical report of the complaints and monetary settlements for the year 2015:

Table 1 - Total Cases Filed with OHR 2013-2015

Table 2 - 2015 Caseload Analysis by Basis

Table 3 - 2015 Monetary Awards Gained through OHR Intervention

Table 4 - Monetary Settlements 2013-2015

Table 5 - 2014-2015 Cases Closed

Table 1: Total Cases Filed with OHR 2013-2015

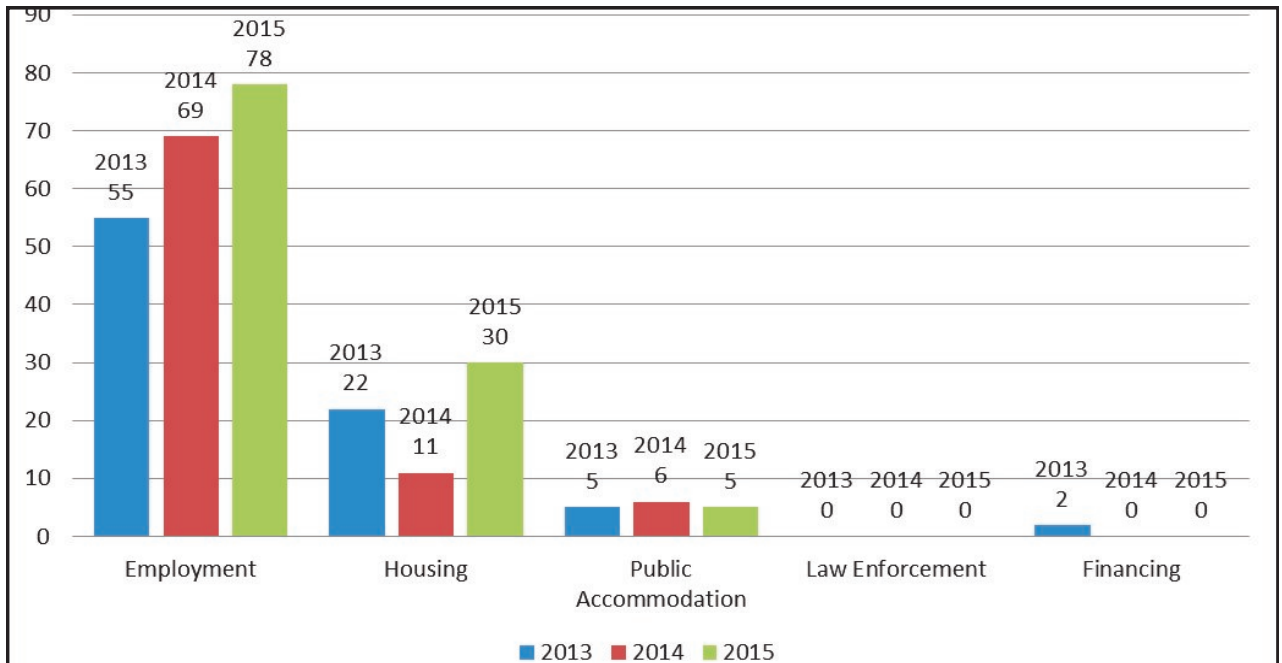


Table 2: 2015 Case Analysis by Basis

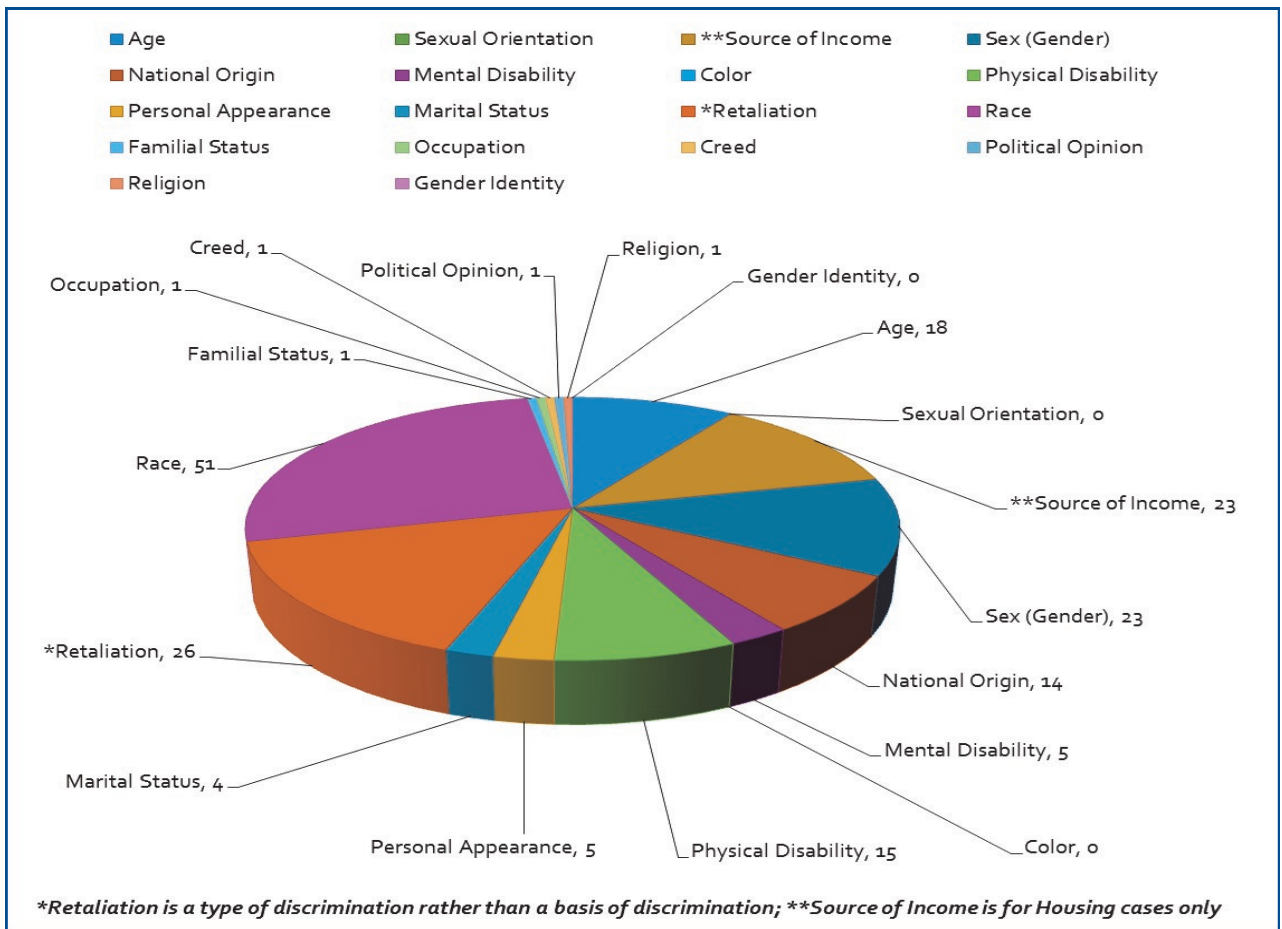


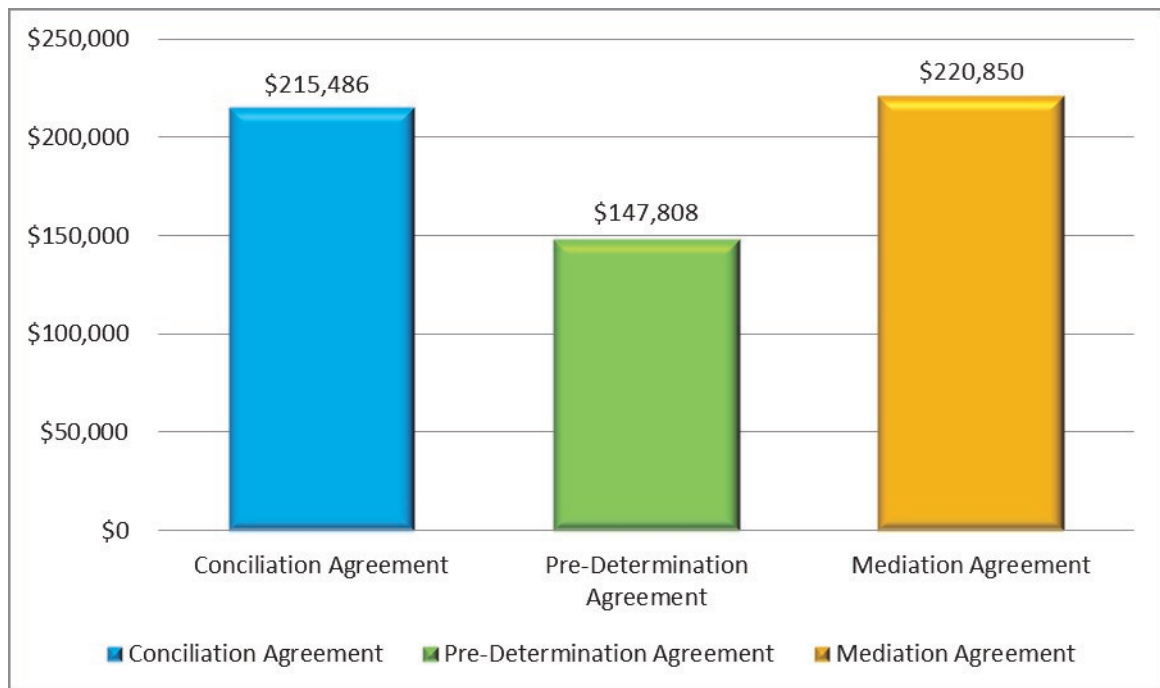
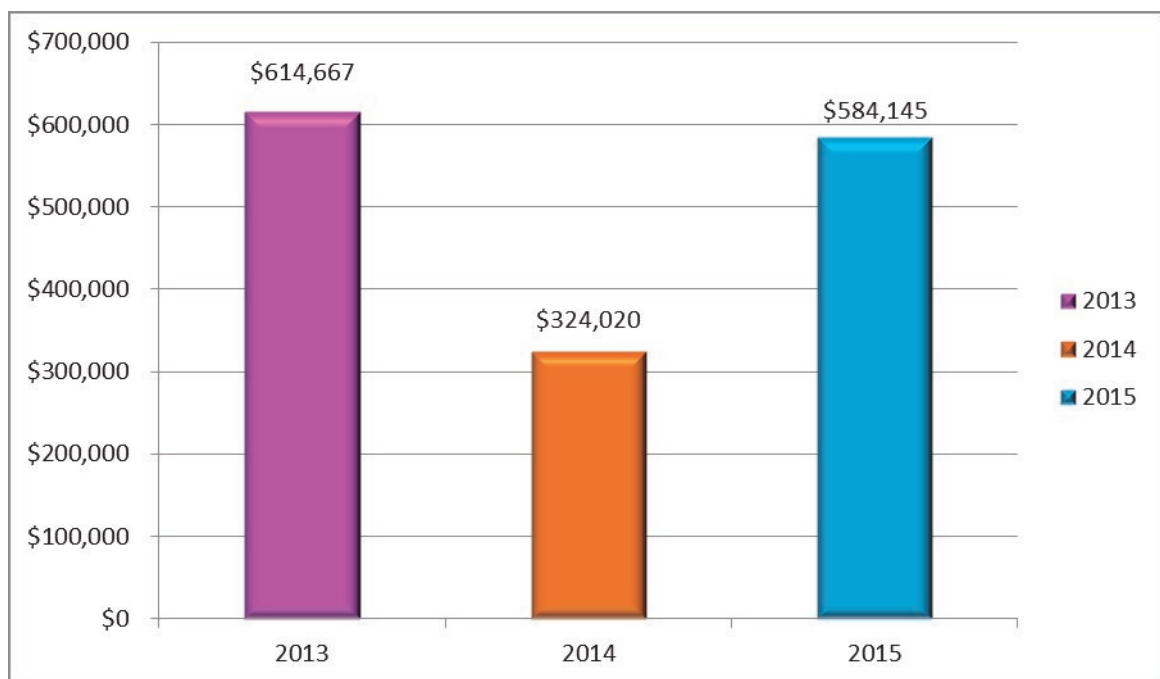
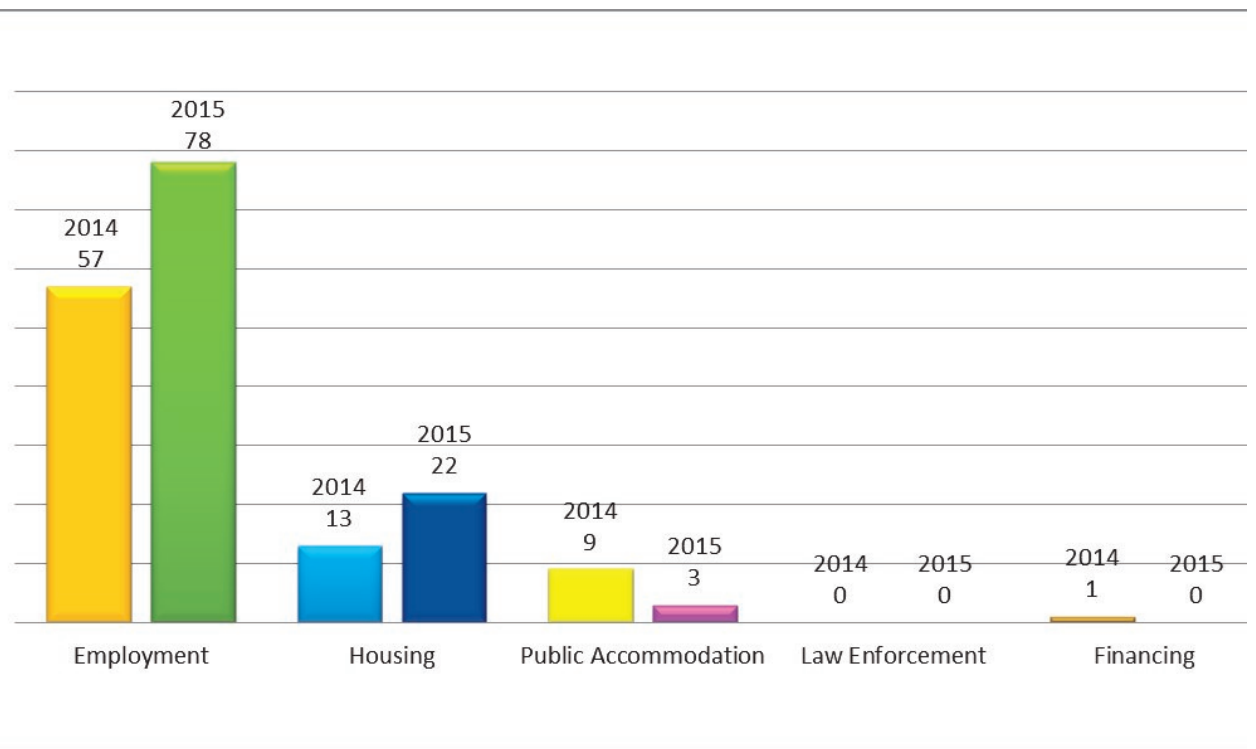
Table 3: 2015 Monetary Awards Gained Through OHR Intervention**Table 4: Monetary Settlements 2013-2015**

Table 5: 2014-2015 Cases Closed



HATE-BIAS INCIDENTS 2015

A hate bias incident (HBI) is an act of prejudice, hate or violence directed against individuals, groups or institutions because of race, religion, ethnic background or sexual orientation. HBIs are intended to cause harm and may result in physical injury, emotional injury or property damage.

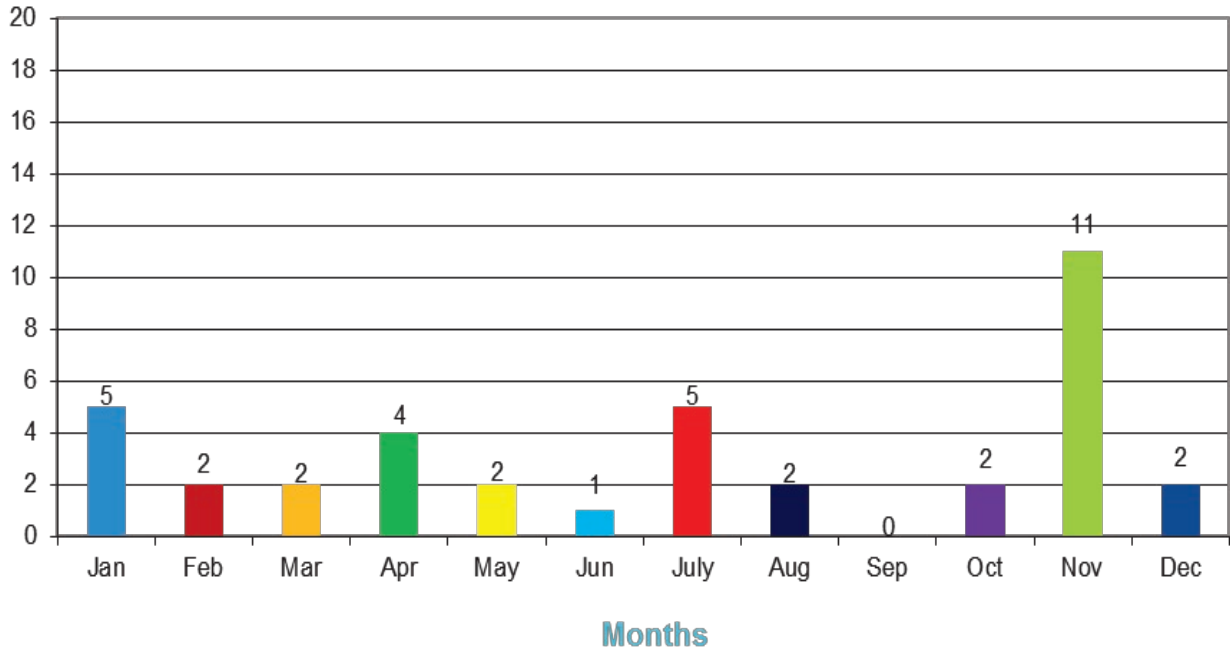
Hate bias incidents pose a unique danger to society. Such acts affect the fundamental rights of the entire community, not just the immediate victim. These incidents cause tension and may erupt into violence among or between different groups.

Certain types of incidents are crimes and, as with all crimes, the police should be notified. If you think an incident has occurred, call and report it to the Howard County police immediately. You may also call the Office of Human Rights (OHR). It is not necessary for the reporter of an HBI to know whether or not the act is a crime. The police will determine which laws are involved.

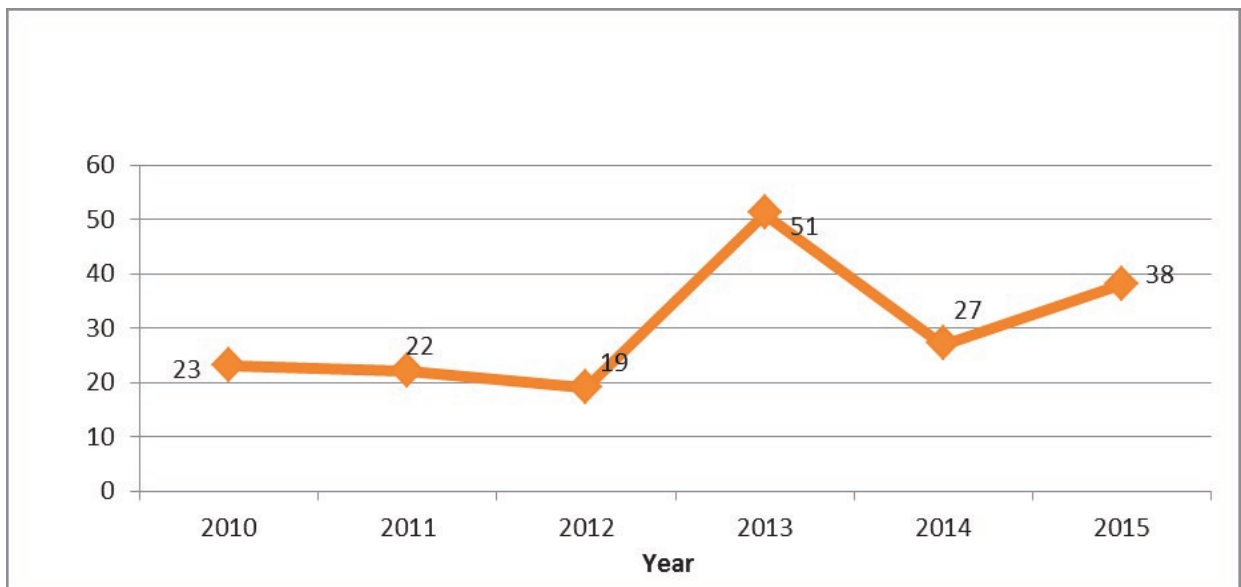
When HBIs are reported, it helps to provide assistance to the victim and the community, to apprehend those responsible, to promote community harmony, and to alert local government.

OHR is working closely with the Howard County Police Department in reviewing reports of hate bias incidents to ensure accurate reporting. The Office of Human Rights (OHR) was established in 1975 by the County Executive and County Council and functions pursuant to the Howard County Code, Section 12.200-12.218.

2015 Hate-Bias Incidents Initially Reported



Hate-Bias Incidents Initially Reported 2010-2015



OUTREACH & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Training and Outreach by OHR Investigative Staff:

1. *Regional Fair Housing Group* – both outreach and training on Fair Housing in the Region, publication of Fair Housing Brochures in English, Spanish and Korean for use in Howard, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford and Anne Arundel County; fair housing training, etc.
2. Howard County Association of Realtors - Fair Housing training for Realtors – February 4, 2015.
3. Human Rights Day in Annapolis – sponsored by the MD Association of Human Relations/ Rights Agencies (MAHRA), March 20, 2015. The Office of Human Rights is a member agency. MAHRA serves as a clearing house for sharing civil and human relations/rights, and Equal Employment Opportunity information among the state, local and national human rights commissions and organizations. Annually, the organization sponsors a day at the MD State Legislature to meet members of the General Assembly, network and receive updates on current human rights legislation.
4. Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE) pursues activities that oppose, resist and eliminate bigotry, prejudice, violence and extremism based on understanding and tolerance among diverse groups in the community. COVE co-sponsored Human Rights Day in Annapolis. An OHR staff member is an officer of this group. COVE meets the first Tuesday of the month to plan and implement these activities.
5. Training for Police Recruits in Academy 38, April 4, 2015 – Diversity Day. This all-day training for police recruits brings together persons from the community. A number of racial, ethnic, disability and LGBT groups assembled to talk with the recruits about their relationship with the Police Department and experiences that they and their constituents have had with Howard County Police Department.
6. OHR participated in the Housing Department's annual housing fair, *Come Home to Howard County*, held on April 11, 2015. OHR takes part as a trainer in the Housing Class on landlord/tenant relations. This is a joint training of OHR (fair housing in Howard County), Consumer Affairs (Landlord/Tenant Law), Department of Inspection, License and Permits (Rental Licensing), and the Housing Commission (Housing Voucher procedures). This innovative program is a one-stop training where all questions about housing sales and rentals can be addressed. OHR also provides information to persons seeking housing.
7. Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8 Voucher) Briefings – OHR Investigative Staff, in cooperation with the Housing Commission, attend all Voucher Briefings for persons who have new vouchers, are moving within Howard County, or are porting into Howard County. This program informs the voucher holders of their Fair Housing Rights in Howard County. Because

OUTREACH & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Training and Outreach by OHR Investigative Staff (cont):

Howard County Fair Housing Law includes Source of Income as a protected class. Persons seeking housing are provided with information about their rights and responsibilities under the law. There are only a few other jurisdictions in MD which have this protection.

8. During this calendar year, OHR has provided a real estate agency in Howard County with housing training in six sessions which include: Rental licensing law and rules in Howard County, fair housing in Howard County, Housing Choice Vouchers, and Landlord/Tenant Law.

9. Housing Mini-Fair – September 19, 2015 – The Housing Office has a smaller version of the same housing fair that is held in April annually. OHR provides information in Housing Discrimination and provides a training event for landlords and tenants similar to the one in April.

Special Events/Meetings

- Dr. Sands attended showing of documentary “The New Blacks” at Morgan State University’s Student Center, sponsored by Women’s Studies. OHR hosted a showing in June 2015. "The New Black" is an informative, measured, and never-not-engaging documentary about the emergence of LGBT consciousness in African-American communities across the U.S., and particularly communities with a strong church presence
- “The New Black” documentary – OHR partnered with PFLAG Columbia-Howard County Chapter, Christ United Methodist Church and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia; Screening Dates: September 10, North Laurel Community Center; September 17, The Bain Center; October 15, Roger Carter Community Center; October 29, Howard County Central Library
- African American Community Roundtable of Howard County partnered with Howard County Police Department hosted a community forum at St John Baptist Church on Saturday, June 20, 2015. HRC Commissioners Rev. Turner, Frank Eastham, and Tim Johnson participated
- OHR hosted a meeting with Conexiones and Howard County Friends of Latin America (HoCoFola) on June 22, 2015 to share ideas and discuss relevant issues relating to Human Rights
- The Office of Human Rights hosted a Roundtable in Howard County in June to discuss legislation regarding End Racial Profiling Act of 2015 with elected officials, community leaders, and faith-based organizations. Requests are being sent for Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Barbara Mikulski and Congressman John Sarbanes to attend and discuss this important legislation

OUTREACH & TRAINING ACTIVITIES

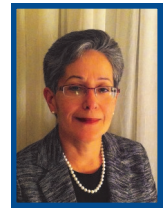
Special Events/Meetings (cont.):

- The 18th Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr./Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel Interfaith Service was held at Beth Shalom, January 16, 2015. HRC Chair gave remarks
- Discussion and Exhibit Tour “The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle to Freedom” at the U.S. Library of Congress, November 17, 2015, sponsored by U.S. Senator Ben Cardin
- OHR/HRC and the Howard County Friends of Latin-America (HoCoFoLA) co-sponsored 18th Annual Human Rights Celebration honoring the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, November 21, 2015 at the Bain Center
- Meeting with School Board members (Frank Eastham and Rosanne Wilson) regarding anti-bullying initiative program “Not In My School” (This series is not used in Howard County yet)
- Maryland Emergency Preparedness Summit for Faith Leaders held December 10, 2015 in Elkridge, MD. OHR co-sponsored the summit
- Religion & Reasonable Accommodations Workshop held December 11, 2015, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights in partnership with the Howard County Office of Human Rights provided a current review of applicable Maryland law on the issue of religious accommodation in the workplace
- Collaborated with the Office of Citizen Services, Grassroots, AGAST, Safe House of Hope, Human Trafficking Task Force members and others regarding the following: 1. Separate building for the Human Trafficking victims; 2. Training for coping, helping and knowing the limits and differences between assisting and enabling; 3. Classes are being scheduled for volunteers in Human Trafficking 101
- OHR co-sponsored the Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) Annual Training Conference, November 9, 2015, Charles I. Ecker Business Training Center, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Columbia, Maryland. MAHRA also sponsors annual training of Human Rights Commissioners throughout Maryland
- Kwanzaa Celebration, December 30, 2015, George Howard Building Lobby

MESSAGE FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CHAIR

Dear Howard County Residents,

The Howard County Human Rights Commission works to ensure that the human rights of all County residents are protected. The commissioners, who must live in the County, represent the diversity of Howard County citizens. That diversity is what makes our County one of the best places to live in this country.



The spirit that makes Howard County special is evidenced by numerous community organizations engaged in activities that promote human rights. We encourage all of you to support these efforts because together we can make our community better every day. Your participation is essential to keep human rights issues as a key focus area in our County's agenda. Recent events, both at home and abroad, make it clear that there must be an ongoing discussion of these issues with a view to finding solutions that protect those who may be not be able to protect themselves.

The Human Rights Commission is pleased to recognize individuals and organizations that have demonstrated exemplary citizenship, dedicated leadership, and outstanding achievement in eliminating or eradicating discrimination, while advancing human rights for all citizens of Howard County. This year the winner of the Human Rights Commission Award is PFLAG Columbia-Howard County. The 2015 Human Rights Commission Award recognizes the organization's commitment to support the families and members of the LGBT community over the last two decades and the very critical role that its advocacy and educational initiatives have played in protecting and advancing human rights in our county.

Let us all continue working so we can be proud to call Howard County home. We can do this by honoring the principles of diversity, acceptance, and opportunity embodied in the County's laws that make it possible to claim our human rights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ivette Lopez". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ivette Lopez
Chair

Human Rights Commission

The Human Rights Commission was established in 1969, and is composed of 11 members and a non-voting member, who is a student under 18 years old. Commissioners live in the county and represent the diversity of Howard County citizens.

The duties and responsibilities of the Commission are prescribed by law, and include recommending a civil rights policy to the County Executive and the County Council concurrently, the authority to make surveys and studies concerning human rights, conditions and problems, as well as, the authority to file a complaint when there is reason to believe a pattern or practice of discrimination exists.

Members of the Human Rights Commission



Genevieve E. Walker-Lightfoot,
Chair
Term expired 3/1/15



Ivette Lopez, Vice Chair
Term expires 3/1/17



Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang
Term expires 3/1/20



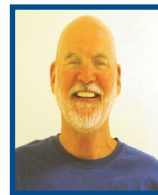
Frank V. Eastham, Jr.
Term expires 3/1/17



Salman A. Hussain
Term expires 3/1/15



Catherine V. Hyde
Term expires 3/1/18



Timothy J. Johnson
Term expires 3/1/16



Opel T. Jones, I
Term expires 3/1/19



Ilene Kessler
Term expires 3/1/18



Rev. Robert Turner
Term expires 3/1/19



H. Taylor Walls
Term expires 3/1/16



Student Commissioner
Giovanna Guarnieri
Term expired 6/30/15



Contact Information:

Office of Human Rights - 410-313-6430

Members of the Human Rights Commission (cont.)



Mohammed Shiraz Ahmed
Term expires 3/1/20



Ivan R. Betancourt
Term expires 3/1/20



Eli Sauerwalt,
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 6/30/16



2015 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AWARD RECIPIENT

The Howard County Human Rights Commission is pleased to announce that PFLAG Columbia-Howard County has been selected as the recipient of the 2015 Human Rights Award. The award is given annually to individuals and/or organizations selected from nominations submitted by the community. The award was presented to PFLAG during its January 2016 monthly meeting.

The Human Rights Commission Award honors individuals and community organizations for contributions to human rights in Howard County. The purpose of the award is to recognize exemplary citizenship, dedicated leadership and outstanding achievement in eliminating or eradicating discrimination, while advancing human rights for all residents of Howard County.

For the past 20 years, PFLAG Columbia-Howard County has been at the forefront of issues involving the LGBT community. It currently serves over 200 families annually, offering support for parents and families of the children and youth, as well as adults, who are members of this community through monthly support meetings. In addition, the organization has been a very effective advocate for this community. Its advocacy efforts were key in getting legislation approved to include gender identity as a protected category in Howard County and have also influenced legislation at the state level. Furthermore, PFLAG Columbia-Howard County has provided training and support to the public school systems in Howard, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Prince Georges and Montgomery counties so they can support the LGBT students on their schools. Education has also been provided to the Howard County Police Department and two major local employers.

The 2015 Human Rights Commission Award recognizes the decades of time, effort and commitment that PFLAG Columbia-Howard County has devoted to supporting the families and members of the LGBT community and, above all, the role that its advocacy and educational initiatives have played in protecting and advancing human rights in our county.



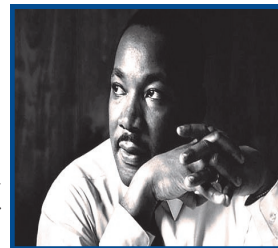
Human Rights Commissioners Ivette Lopez and Bianca Chang (pictured left) presented the 2015 Human Rights Awards to Catherine Hyde and Sue Garner of PFLAG (pictured right) during the organization's January 2016 meeting. *Photo provided by Steve Charing.*

OUTREACH & TRAINING ACTIVITIES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Outreach Activities Co-Sponsored/Supported by the Human Rights Commission (HRC):

- The Annual Human Rights Awards Program – awards a person and an organization for their human rights work in Howard County
- Gender Conference East – Co-sponsored by the Human Rights Commission (<http://www.genderconferenceeast.org/>)
- Co-sponsor Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr./Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel Interfaith Service at Beth Shalom
- African American Community Roundtable of Howard County MD partnered with Howard County Public School System to address parent’s concerns and share alternative methods to those concerns
- Participated in the County’s 50 + Expo which promotes awareness and benefits for Howard County’s aging population. Participants received information, complementary free gifts, and learned more about all of the services Howard County offers to its citizens
- Commissioners attended Howard County Women’s Hall of Fame ceremony
- Participated in programs and initiatives sponsored by Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) <http://www.pflagmd.org>
- Frank Eastham, Commissioner, attended the Annual White House National Prayer Breakfast, February 2015. Commissioner Eastham facilitated a diversity break-out session at the annual event.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



The Howard County Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission was established by order of the Howard County Executive to "...encourage and coordinate appropriate ceremonies and activities honoring Martin Luther King, Jr..."

The seventeen-member Commission meets once a month at 6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., Columbia, MD, at which time, strategies are formulated for the forthcoming January commemoration of Dr. King.

County residents are continually sought to fill Commissioner vacancies, as well as fill positions on various subcommittees. Commissioners are appointed by the County Executive to serve an initial term of two years.

Persons interested in serving on the Commission should contact the Office of Human Rights, (410) 313-6430.

MLK COMMISSION MEMBERS

Bessie Bordenave
Term expires: 2/17

Rev. Rodney Morton
Term expires: 2/17

Dawn Bruton
Term expires: 2/17

Namrata Nagarajan
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 2/17

Susie D. H. Carter
Term expires: 2/17

Deborah Owens
Term expires: 2/17

Caroline Harper, Ph.D.
Term expires: 2/16

Edward Smith
Term expires: 2/17

Sonja Blake Hamada
Term expires: 2/17

Prateek Swamykumar
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 2/17

Jetheda Hernandez, Chair
Term expires: 2/15

Patricia Thorne
Term expires: 2/17

Helaine M. Jeffers
Term expires: 2/17

Samantha Truong
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 2/16

Roberta Kelly
Term expires: 2/17

Stephanie A. Wall
Term expires: 2/16

Amanda Llorens
Term expires: 2/17

Tracey L. Williams
Term expires: 2/17

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

The Commission is charged with preserving the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It organizes an annual celebration of Dr. King's life to bring the Howard County community together and focus on Dr. King's legacy. The Living the Dream Award recipients are honored along with middle and high school essay winners. The Celebration is followed by a Day of Service across Howard County, to realize Dr. King's directive of service to the larger community, a *Day on Not a Day Off*.

Throughout the year, the Commission used the theme, "*Journey Toward the Dream, - Equality, Justice, and Peace*" as a guiding force for the work that they were involved in throughout the year.

The 2015-2016 Celebration was held Sunday, January 17, 2016 at Howard County Community College's Horowitz Visual and Performing Arts Center – Smith Theatre. The keynote speaker was Vic Carter, WJZ TV News Anchor. The day of service, held on Monday January 18, 2016, was centered at North Laurel Community Center (NLCC) and at various sites across Howard County.

The Living the Dream Award, recognizes a Howard County individual and organization that model the life and legacy of Dr. King, was awarded to Julie Rosenthal, founder of Food on the 15th and The Phoenix Sentinels, an organization that recruits and supports minority recruits.

For 2015-2016, the essay theme was Dr. King's words spoken in Los Angeles on February 25, 1967, "*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands in moments of challenge and controversy.*"

There were a total of 147 essay submissions; 6 Middle Schools - 34 submissions; 9 High Schools – 104 submissions; 2 Private Schools – 9 submissions. The winners were:

- Middle school winners: 1st Myles Owens, Oakland Mills Middle School; 2nd Swarna Velumani, Lake Elkhorn Middle School; 3rd Shelby Lechner, Murray Hill Middle School
- High School winners: 1st Ethan Swope, Wilde Lake High School; 2nd Khari Gardiner, Marriotts Ridge High School; 3rd Jared Kagel, Marriotts Ridge High School

The Day of Service was done in partnership with Volunteer Howard, a project of the Columbia Association, with funding in part from the Maryland Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism.

Volunteer Howard estimated that more than 260 volunteers, including County Executive Kittleman, engaged in nearly 550 hours of service with 13 local agencies. They served at the North Laurel Community Center, the Howard County Food Bank, Success in Style, and Johnston Square Park.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT (CONT.)

New this year, a food collection effort on behalf of the Community Action Council (CAC) was held at several grocery stores across Howard County. Volunteers collected 3,174 pounds of food and non-food items - despite blowing winds and below freezing temperatures!

At NLCC, volunteers made cards for seniors; learned Hands-Only CPR; learned non-violent language techniques; learned about volunteer opportunities; and clipped and sorted coupons (totaling \$12,420.13 in savings) for our troops stationed overseas. Participating organizations included: Columbia Association Art Center, Howard County Fire & Rescue, Success in Style, League of Women Voters of Howard County, Volunteer Center Serving Howard County, Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center at HCC, The 6th Branch, and River Hill Community Association.

Across Howard County, volunteers met at Days End Farm Horse Rescue, Inc., Neighbor Ride, and the Community Action Council of Howard County.

The MLK Holiday Commission wishes to thank all participants, elected officials, County residents, and the Office of Human Rights for supporting this Annual program and for the commitment to live the dream of peace, justice and nonviolence.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY COMMISSION STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS



Pictured from left to right: Murray Hill Middle School Principal, Joshua Wasilewski for 3rd place winner, Shelby Lechner; Swarna Welumani, 2nd place, Lake Elkhorn Middle School; Myles A. Clark, 1st place, Oakland Mills Middle School; Jared Kagle, Marriotts Ridge High School, 3rd place; Khari Gardner, Marriotts Ridge High School, 2nd place; and Ethan Swope, Wilde Lake High School, 1st place

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY COMMISSION LIVING THE DREAM AWARD RECIPIENTS



Pictured from left to right: Allan H. Kittleman, County Executive, Julie Rosenthal, founder Food on the 15th, Living the Dream award recipient; Jetheda Hernandez, MLK Chair; Roberta Kelly, Living the Dream Committee Chair; and Patricia Thorn, Co-chair, Living the Dream Committee



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Calvin Ball, III, County Council Chair; Living the Dream award recipient Battalion Chief Louis Winston, founder of The Phoenix Sentinels; Jetheda Hernandez, MLK Chair; Roberta Kelly, Living the Dream Committee Chair; Patricia Thorn, Co-chair, Living the Dream Committee; and Allan H. Kittleman, County Executive



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2015 Annual Report

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS &
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION