



# Office of Human Rights Annual Report – 2018

Department of County Administration, Lonnie R. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer



*“Let’s be that epoch of belief about a reality of equality and inclusion for all, rejecting racism, Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, misogyny, homophobia, ageism, discrimination and hate in all forms.”*

*Howard County Executive Calvin Ball  
2019 State of the County Speech*



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## Letter from County Executive

Dear Friends,



As a Howard County resident, I am proud of our reputation for inclusivity and our commitment to eradicating all discrimination. Historically, our Office of Human Rights (OHR) has been charged with this task, working on behalf of the most vulnerable by investigating complaints of unlawful discrimination and violence.

As reported incidents of hate have risen at the national level, Howard County has not been immune. This report documents 58 hate-bias incidents in 2018, defined as acts of prejudice, hate or violence directed because of race, religion, ethnic background or sexual orientation. These numbers represent a significant increase from the previous year. The report also highlights incidences of employment discrimination, housing discrimination, and public accommodation discrimination last year.

This 2018 Annual Report from the Office of Human Rights and the Human Rights Commission highlights important work that, unfortunately, continues to be necessary. I want to thank everyone at OHR for their work to investigate and address these, and other, unacceptable issues.

While OHR has been doing great work, it is important to make sure their services are well known in the community. In addition to the investigative work of OHR, community outreach efforts are equally critical to making a positive difference. I am pleased to say that the findings of this report track well with the steps we are already taking to expand outreach efforts and connect people with our services.

In February, I passed an Executive Order to create a review committee for OHR. This committee was tasked with identifying areas for growth, allowing us to better address immediate needs while also making the necessary long-term improvements. The committee's report confirmed the importance of investigative work and the need for our expanded outreach efforts.

Moving forward, OHR will continue to be a leader in the community, a symbol of our values, and a force for positive change. Once again, I thank everyone at OHR who is making Howard County safer and more just.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Calvin Ball". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive

## Letter from Office of Human Rights Administrator

Dear Howard County Residents,



The 2018 Annual Report of the Office of Human Rights (OHR) and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) is a critical resource on the status of civil and human rights in our county. In a political age where bigotry, racism, and xenophobia run amok throughout the nation, OHR has the responsibility to investigate and resolve discrimination complaints in the areas of Employment, Housing, Public Accommodation, Financing and Law Enforcement. The investigators in this office are impartial and do this work with integrity and fairness for both the Complainant and the Respondent. In 2018, OHR received 293 discrimination complaints, 215 inquiries, opened 78 new cases and issued 54 findings. Twenty-two cases were resolved in the following ways: Settled - \$9,962.50, Conciliation - \$14,000.00, Predetermination - \$65,590.00, and Mediation - \$5,122.645 totaling \$94,175.15.

Section 12.206 of the Howard County Code exhorts OHR to “serve as a catalyst in fostering attitudes and beliefs among Howard County residents which confirm that all individuals have an equal opportunity to pursue their lives free of discrimination.” To that end, OHR participates in numerous outreach activities and partners with many community organizations through diversity forums, summits, interactive workshops and trainings to equip participants with the necessary skills to promote unity, peace, justice, equality and inclusion for all residents. Such partnerships include, but are not limited to, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission, Howard County Public School System, Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE), Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA), Office of Housing and Community Development, , Howard County Police Department’s Hate-Crime Unit, Department of Justice (DOJ), A Safe Place, Human Trafficking Victim Awareness Group, Howard County Human-Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Council, Gender Sensitivity Group, Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Group, Conexiones of Howard County, Howard County League of Korean Americans (HoCoLOKA), Howard County Friends of Latin America, and local LGBTQ+ groups. However, it is critical, as OHR looks to the future, to align itself fully with its codified mission and partner with the public, local government agencies and community groups in order to develop a stronger presence to ensure that the broader Howard County community is aware of OHR’s purpose and resources.

All people deserve to be treated with respect, to expect justice, to pursue happiness, to live in peace, and to have an equal opportunity to live a life of inclusion and equity. OHR believes and promotes all efforts for the common good of all Howard County residents. Deep appreciation is extended to the OHR staff for the services they render to the residents of Howard County with steadfast dedication and professionalism in dispensing their duties. I am thankful that the OHR staff fundamentally believes it is our duty to become better in the work of eradicating discrimination in every category, to keep building and dreaming, and to create a Howard County where the common thread of empathy binds us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janssen Evelyn".

Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq.  
Acting Human Rights Administrator

## Office of Human Rights

### Staff

#### Acting Administrator

Janssen E. Evelyn, Esq.

#### Investigative Staff

Mary M. Campbell, Senior Investigator and Compliance Officer

Cheryl Brower, Investigator

Todd Givens, Investigator

#### Outreach Staff

Stephanie Chapple, Community Outreach Coordinator

Farheen Sheik, Community Outreach Coordinator

#### Administrative Staff

Evelyn Boulware, Administrative Aide

Chaunta Taylor, Administrative Support Technician

## Mission Statement

The Howard County 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; resolve complaints by conference, conciliation or litigation; and enforce the Howard County Human Rights Law. In addition, the Office serves as a catalyst in fostering attitudes and beliefs among Howard County residents to ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to pursue lives free of discrimination.

## 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 contacting our office. 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 the alleged discrimination.**

## Complaint Summary 2018

For the calendar year 2018, OHR issued 54 findings, closed 90 cases and opened 78 new cases. Investigators responded to an additional 215 inquiries which did not become cases. OHR participated in community programs, as well as cooperated with public agencies and private groups on educational programs, outreach activities and training.

## 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 (OHR), 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).

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 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 and in an effort 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 OHR.

## 2018 Total Caseload Analysis

The following tables provide a statistical report of the complaints and monetary settlements for the year 2017:

Table 1 - Total Cases Filed with OHR 2016-2018

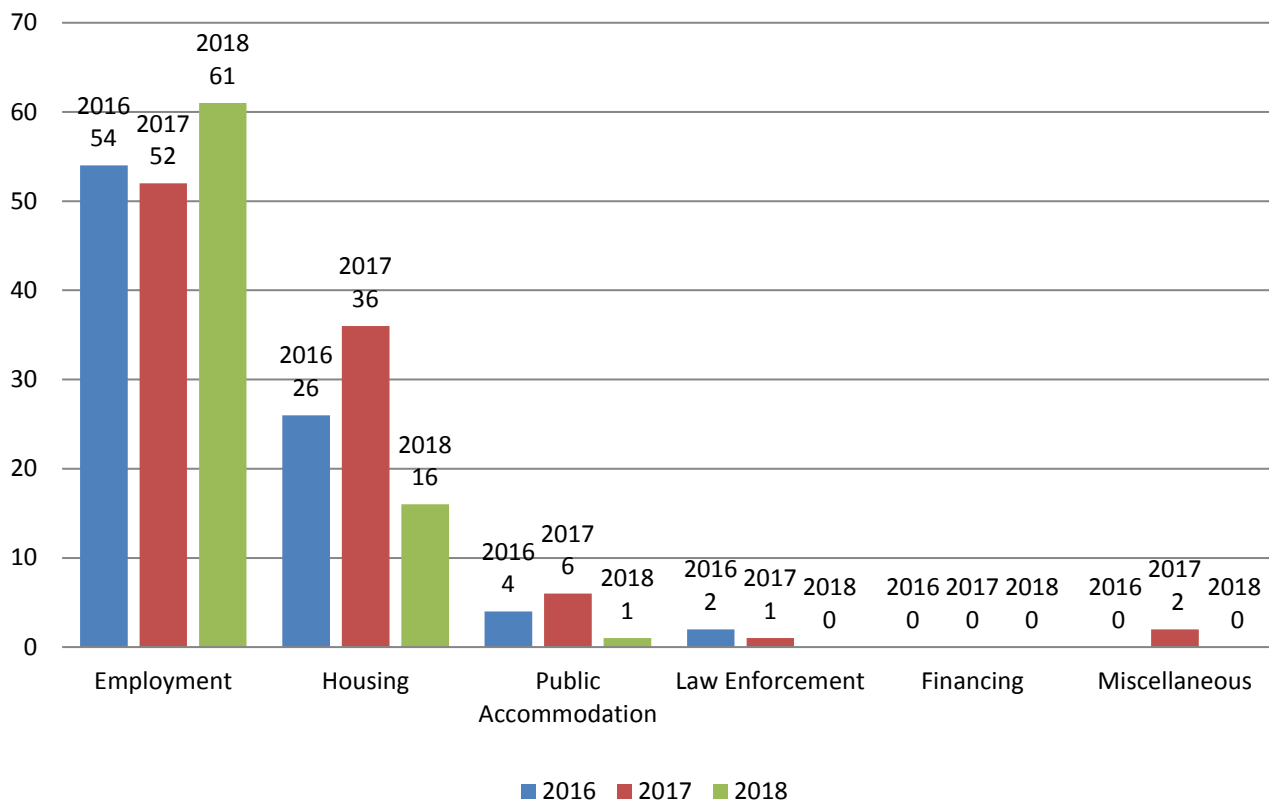
Table 2 - Caseload Analysis by Basis 2018

Table 3 - Monetary Awards Gained through OHR Intervention 2018

Table 4 - Monetary Settlements 2016-2018

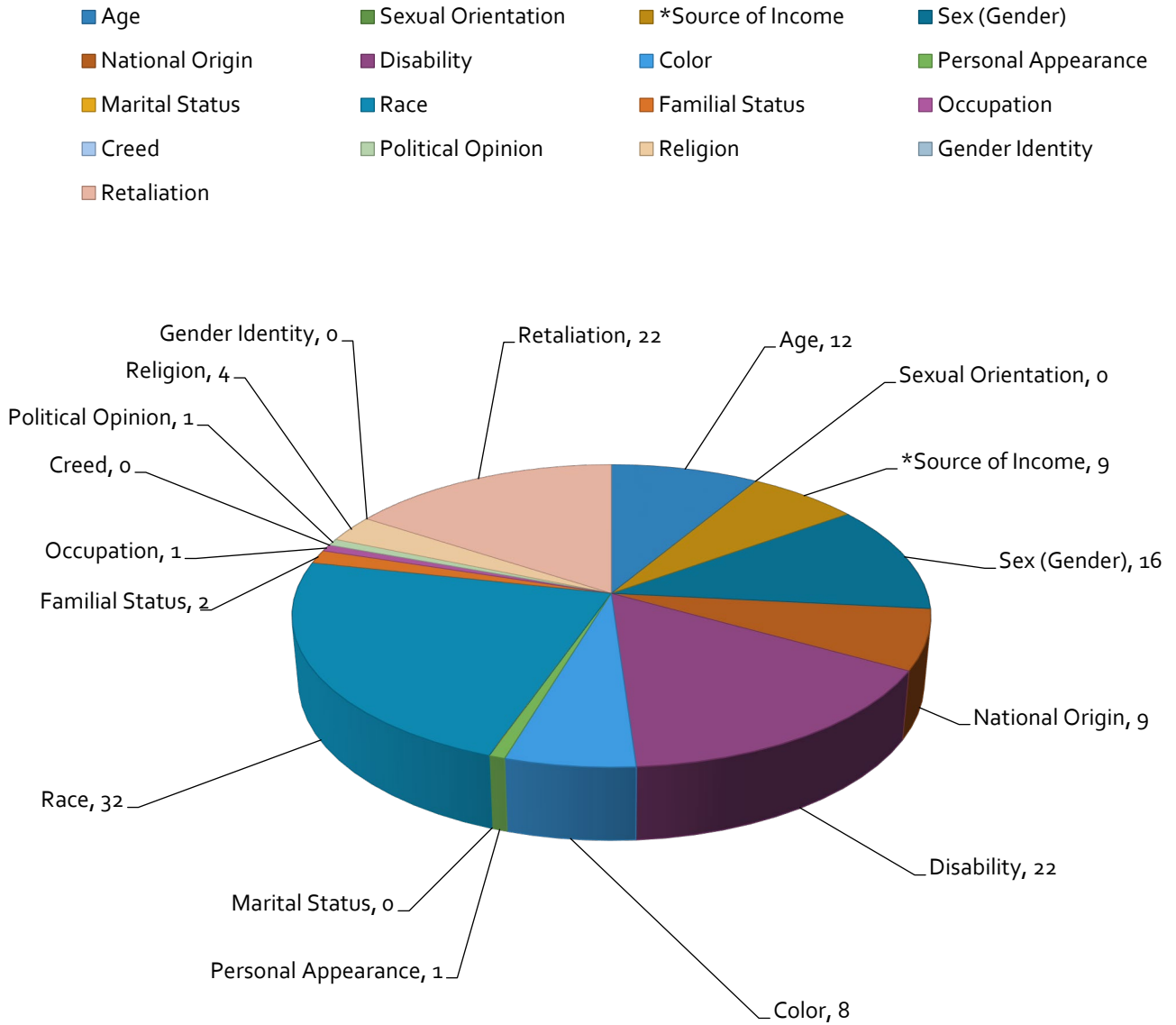
Table 5 - Cases Closed 2016-2018

**Table 1 - Total Cases Filed with OHR 2016-2018**



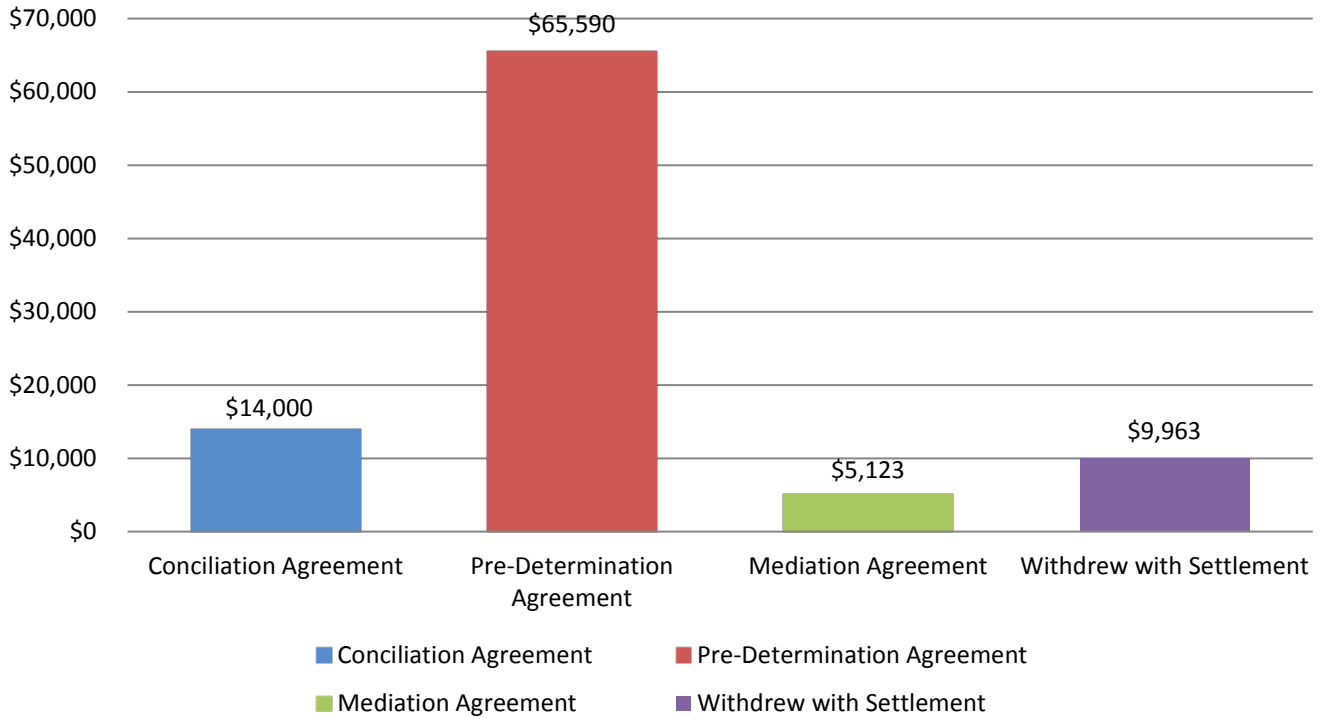


**Table 2 - Caseload Analysis by Basis 2018**



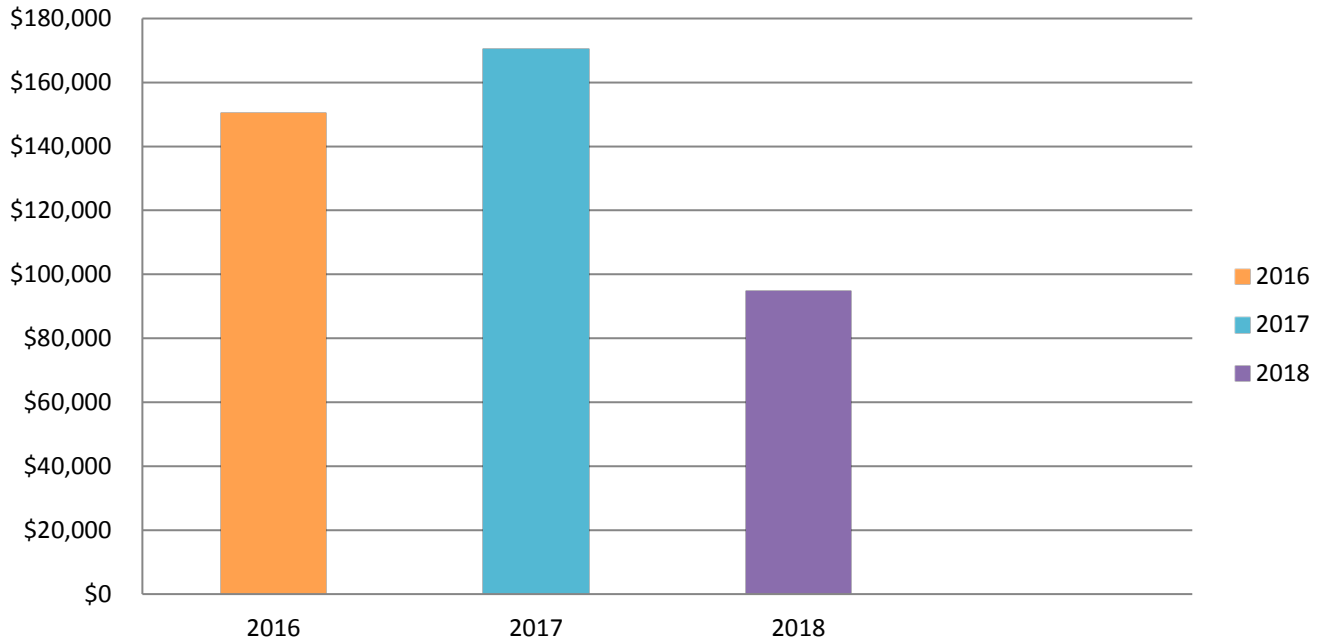
**Note: \*Source of Income is for Housing cases only**

**Table 3 - Monetary Awards Gained through OHR Intervention 2018**

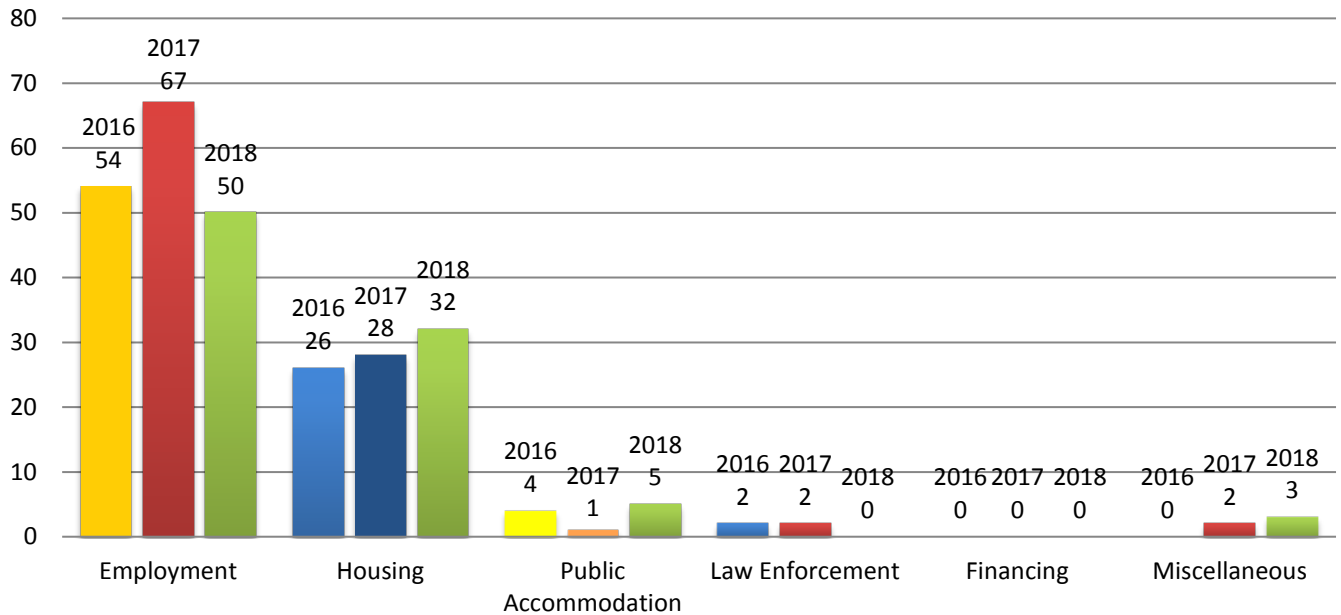


In addition to the monetary awards, OHR settled a number of cases which included non-monetary settlement terms. For example, five cases had persons with vouchers renew or enter into new leases. Reasonable accommodations were provided for a number of complainants including: working from home, new supervisor, a chair at the workstation, and health benefits provided. Other non-monetary awards were a dress code accommodation, neutral reference, discharge changed to resignation, training in policy, apartment renovated, picture removed from company materials, and open discussion of policies to clarify expectations.

**Table 4 - Monetary Settlements 2016-2018**



**Table 5 - Cases Closed 2016-2018**



## Hate-Bias Incidents 2018

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.

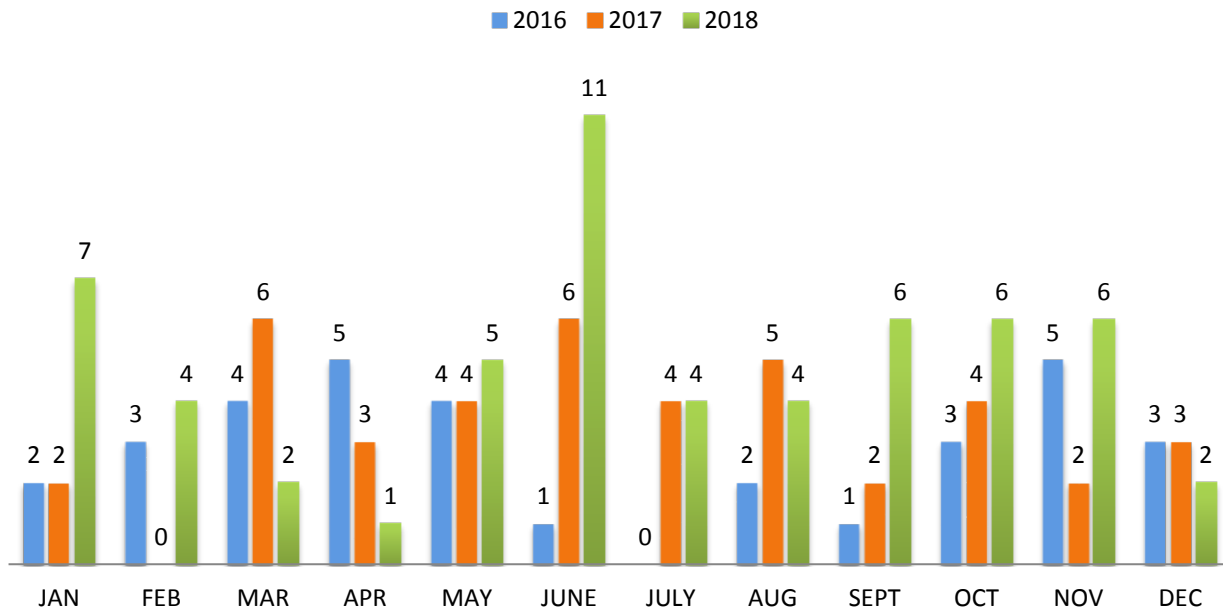
HBIs pose a unique danger to society. Such acts affect the fundamental rights of the entire community, not just the immediate victim. These incidents cause tension and may erupt into violence among or between different groups.

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 the act is a crime. The police will determine which laws are involved.

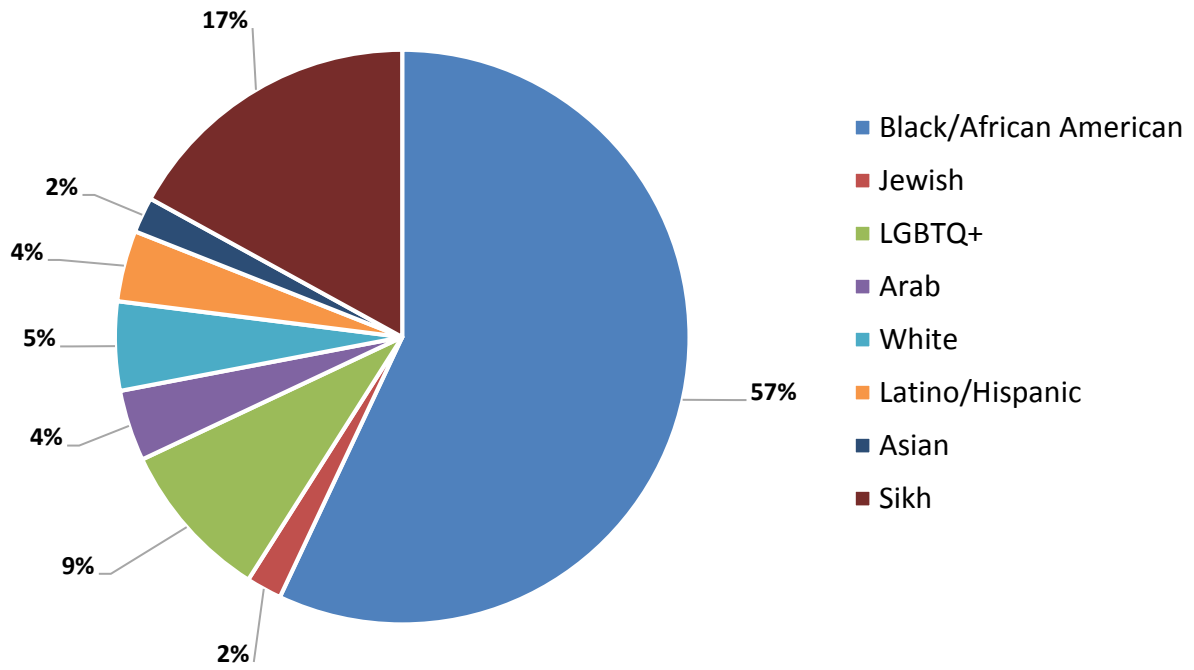
When HBIs are reported, OHR helps to provide assistance to the victim and the community, apprehend those responsible, promote community harmony, and alert local government.

OHR is working closely with the Howard County Police Department to review reports of hate-bias incidents and ensure accurate reporting. The 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.

### Hate-Bias Incidents by Month



## 2018 Bias Motivations



## Outreach Activities & Professional Development

### Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) continues to work closely as a charter member of this group in order to meet the goals of fair housing in Howard County and the region. It prepared and distributed an Analysis of Fair Housing Impediments in this region (Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, Harford County, and Anne Arundel County), in 2012 which was submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2012. It is now preparing the Analysis of Impediments for 2020. Some of the regional accomplishments are:

- Created the new regional project-based housing voucher program
- Worked to streamline procedures for the porting of families with vouchers within our region
- Continued Fair Housing staffing at Baltimore Metropolitan Council
- Developed a regional preservation policy and data base
- Removed local resolution requirements for low income housing tax credits (LIHTC) and state housing subsidies
- Produced and distributed fair housing education book (11,000 in three years)

Upcoming projects include:

- Rolling out voucher portability booklet and video
- Sustain the regional project-based voucher program beyond initial seeding
- Complete and submit the Analysis of Impediments to HUD

Our work with this group moves the County forward on making advances in civil rights in housing.

### Briefings for Howard County Housing Voucher Holders

Throughout the year, OHR Investigators brief voucher holders at the Howard County Housing Commission on their rights and responsibilities under the Howard County Fair Housing Law as they search for new homes using their portable housing vouchers. In particular, the investigators explain their rights and responsibilities under the *Source of Income* portion of the law, as well as providing them information about how to get help for landlord/tenant issues.

### Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE)

COVE is an alliance of public and private civil and human rights agencies, law enforcement, advocacy, religious and educational organizations in Maryland. OHR has been a member since 1984 and Mary M. Campbell, OHR Compliance Officer, is currently co-chair. The goal of the organization is peaceful co-existence among diverse groups in the community. It sponsors programs which develop an awareness of the seriousness of hate crimes. In 2018, it worked with the MD Association of Human and Civil Rights Agencies to dialogue with the State Legislature on Human Rights Day in MD. Human Rights Day in Annapolis Tuesday, March 13, 2018. This year's theme is *Education, Equity and Civil Rights*. Special guests included:

- Maurice Morales – State Delegate & Vice-Chair, Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
- Joy Schaefer from the Kirwan Commission
- Cheryl Glenn, Chair of the Legislative Black Caucus
- Ariana Kelly, Chair of the Women's Caucus
- HBCU President of Coppin State College

## **The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Fair Employment Practices Agencies (FEPA) Regional Meeting – September 23 and 24, 2018**

As a part of the contract to investigate cases, EEOC provides training for OHR Investigators and our Attorney. Mary M. Campbell, Todd Givens and our then attorney, Faith Adelman, attended this training which dealt with current issues in employment discrimination, recent policy decisions and working across agencies in the Philadelphia Region.

## **Co-sponsoring of Training Events on Employment Discrimination Issues with MD Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)**

OHR is working closely with the training and outreach division of MCCR and sponsored an event 10/4/2018 for employers in Howard and surrounding counties, on Disability Law for Employers. On 12/12/2018, training was held on Religion and Accommodation and the Law for employers. OHR and MCCR plan to continue this with a training event on 1/9/2019 on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, again for local employers. By working together, we can reach more employers, provide quality training and keep costs low.

## **Providing Support and co-sponsoring with MCCR for the Maryland Equity and Inclusion Leadership Program**

The goal is to develop, engage, and support current and emerging leaders from private, public, and nonprofit sectors who are interested and committed to helping their organizations become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive at various levels. OHR provided rooms for the planning sessions throughout 2018 and will co-sponsor the meeting in July 2019.

## Outreach/Training Activities by Office of Human Rights Administrator

1. African-American Cultural Center – Workshop, “Violence & Discrimination, Oakland Mills High School – January 2018
2. Feeding Homeless Families – Ridgely Run Community Center. Information regarding discrimination, violence and injustice was shared with the families. – January 2018
3. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Washington, D.C. – February 2018.
4. Chinese New Year Celebration – February 2018
5. University of Maryland Law School Lecture on Thurgood Marshall (Injustice, Race, & Division). OHR staff attended this event. – February 2018
6. Legislative Day in Annapolis – Visitation of legislators to talk about issues of concern in Maryland, passing bill on anti-human trafficking and massage parlors and making changes in laws which affect Marylanders. Keynote Speaker, Dr. Calvin Ball – March 2018.
7. United Nations Headquarters African Diaspora Heritage, New York, New York – Forced tribal journey through Africa to America and the effects on African-Americans of today – March 2018.
8. Life Renewal Inc. – A new business serving the residents of Howard County who have some issues. Counseling as well as medical treatment is available – April 2019.
9. Village Board of Directors planning for Sister to Sister program of Howard County – Owen Brown, Columbia, MD – April 2018.
10. NAACP's Platinum Freedom Fund Jazz Breakfast and Awards Celebration (Howard County Branch) – Martins West, Baltimore, MD – Celebrating 71 years – April 2018.
11. University of Maryland – Francis King Carey School of Law, Baltimore Maryland - Seminar by Judge Bell and University of Maryland Law professors regarding black lawyers' contributions to America and honoring the history of black lawyers and judges - May 2018.
12. The Regional Office of Human Rights (Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County) are jointly sponsoring a 2-day event regarding “Post Slavery Traumatic Syndrome” with Author, Dr. Joy DeGruy. North Laurel Community Center, 2:30p – 6 p.m. – May 6-7, 2018.
13. Iftar Dinner, Owen Brown Community Center, Columbia, MD – Iftar is a ritual observed by Muslims during Ramadan, one of their holy festivals. During the month of Ramadan, Muslims observe a daily fast during the daytime. They have a pre-dawn meal and fast throughout the day. They break their daily fast with a special meal in the evening, which is known as Iftar. – May-June 2018.
14. Race & Unity Task Force of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha of Howard County – In collaboration with Howard Community College, OHR participated in the colloquium entitled, The Arc of Justice: Past, Present and Future. The event featured a panel discussion addressing issues related to race and diversity, followed by facilitated breakout sessions. – June 2018.
15. African American Cultural Center, Historic Oakland Manor – Local history of Howard County Blacks – June 2018.
16. Howard County Police Department promotes human trafficking awareness to the Millionaires Club of Howard County, Ten Oaks Ball Room, Columbia, MD – July 2018.
17. HCPSS Student Leadership Forum and Multi-Cultural Diversity Production – “Student, Family and Opioids,” How all are affected – July 2018.



18. Islamic Women Meet, Dar-al-TAQWA (Pakistani, Indian, African, Indonesian, Bangladesh) – Clarksville, MD. Invited leaders of other ethnicities to share experiences and to have SMALL talks about area “SAMENESS” – July 2018.
19. International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) Annual Conference – This year’s theme “Advancing the Human Right Agenda: The Fierce Urgency of Now” affords us the opportunity to strategically define a compelling human rights agenda for our member agencies as we face the most challenging time for our work in recent years. We have planned a conference with provocative speakers and plenary sessions on global human rights and its local impact, fair housing and the 50th Anniversary of the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, LGBTQ issues, the impact of gun laws on civil rights, human trafficking and the effect on immigrant communities, employment law legal update, state and local implementation of international human rights standards and strategies and a public forum with national civil rights leaders and advocates. The mission of IAOHRA is to provide opportunities and forums for the exchange of ideas and information among member agencies and other human rights advocates. IAOHRA provides assistance in the development of programs for eliminating illegal discrimination in employment, housing, education, public accommodations, public services and commercial transactions, including banking and lending practices. We develop educational programs on human rights and civil rights issues and serves as a clearinghouse for information exchange between human rights agencies around the world. – August 2018
20. Center on Social Justice – Silver Spring, MD – Working for new legislation to assist victims of human trafficking and incarcerated people to have restored rights such as employment in order to provide for their family – September 2018.
21. Chinese of Howard County Gathering – Celebration of Chinese heritage and cultural values – October 2018.
22. Harriet Tubman Foundation Juneteenth Celebration – Columbia, MD – Juneteenth, also known as Juneteenth Independence Day or Freedom Day, is an American holiday that commemorates the June 19, 1865 announcement of the abolition of slavery in the State of Texas, and more generally, the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans throughout the former Confederacy of the southern United States. Juneteenth is recognized as a state holiday or special day of observance in forty-five states – September 2018.
23. Maryland Korean Festival – Howard County Fair Grounds, West Friendship, Maryland – September 15, 2018
24. HCPSS – Educational Partnerships Celebration, Sheraton Hotel – Columbia, MD – September 25, 2018.
25. Korean Community LOKA Event – Domestic Violence Seminar. OHR partnered with HCPD to make presentation – September 2018
26. Howard County Police Department Community Outreach Division Security/Safety – Howard Community College – Showing safety measures to local houses of worship. What to do if...? All being alert to their surroundings – October 2018.
27. Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) – monthly regional meetings. MAHRA Annual Training Conference for commissioners from around the state. Classes included: Courageous Conversation; Domestic Violence, and the Housing Crisis. OHR hosted the event - October 25, 2018.
28. Black Pioneers of Howard County (1800-1965) – George Howard Building – A step back in history to celebrate and honor those who forged a path. Though rough at times, they made life wonderful growing up in Howard County’s black neighborhoods. Those who attended could reminisce through photographs and enjoy the entertainment and refreshments as we celebrated our kindred spirits – November 2018.

29. Howard County Police Department Safety & Security Houses of Worship – West Liberty United Methodist Church – December 2018.
30. KWANZAA Celebration hosted by the Office of Human Rights. Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration that is celebrated in the United States, as well as other countries with populations of African descendants. Five common sets of values are essential to the activities of the week: ingathering, reverence, commemoration, recommitment, and celebration, as well as seven principles: Unity (Umoja), Self-determination (Kujichagulia), Collective Work and Responsibility (Ujima), Cooperative Economics (Ujamaa), Purpose (Nia), Creativity (Kuumba), and Faith (Imani). The holiday aims to unify and uplift those who observe it. The celebration honors African heritage in African-American culture and is observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating with a feast and gift-giving. – December 26, 2018.

## Letter from Human Rights Commission Chair



February 18, 2019

Dear Partners in Community Service,

It was my honor to serve as the Chair of the Howard County Human Rights Commission for a second year. I want to thank my fellow Commissioners for your service and support. I also want to thank Dr. Barbara Sands and the Office of Human Rights staff for all that you did to safeguard individuals from discrimination in our County, investigate complaints, and propose just remedies and outcomes.

This past year we continued our commitment to ensure that Howard County remain a place of equity and access. In addition to hearing cases, we provided a neutral forum for resolving complaints of discrimination. We held our Annual Awards dinner honoring outstanding individuals and organizations, attended conferences to get further equipped with resource information to better serve those who live and work in Howard County, and several Commissioners gave visibility to the Commission by attending major community events. We also donated personal items for human trafficking victims. Lastly, I wrote letters to the editor in response to local hate crimes and incidents of injustice in our community and country. Attached please find some of the 2018 highlights.

I encourage you to read about our work as we promoted equality and opportunity throughout this County. For 2019, we welcome our new chair, Bob Ford. Under his leadership the Commission will take additional strides to educate the community at large through engaging with strategic organizations.

Thanks to all of you for your dedicated service. Keep up the great and important work.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Robert Turner  
Human Rights Commission, Chair

## Human Rights Commission



**REVEREND ROBERT TURNER,  
CHAIR**  
Term expires: 3/1/19



**MOHAMMED SHIRAZ AHMED,  
VICE CHAIR**  
Term expires: 3/1/20



**SHIVANIA K. AGHERA**  
Term expires: 3/1/22



**CHUEN-CHIN BIANCA CHANG**  
Term expires: 3/1/20



**BOB FORD**  
Term expires: 3/1/23



**HECTOR GARCIA**  
Term expires: 3/1/22



**JOAN HASH**  
Term expires: 6/1/21



**PETER HWANG**  
Term expires: 6/1/21



**OPEL T. JONES, I**  
Term expires: 3/1/19



**ILENE KESSLER**  
Term expires: 3/1/18



**SCOTT MARKOW**  
Term expires: 3/1/23



**KUI ZHAO**  
Term expires: 3/1/20



**SHARON JEON,  
Student Commissioner**  
Term expires: 6/30/18

## 2018 Human Rights Commission Award Recipients

The Howard County Human Rights Commission is pleased to announce that **Dr. Yen Li** was selected as the recipient of the 2018 Individual Human Rights Award.

As a former Principal of the Chinese Language School of Columbia, **Dr. Yen Li** has spent decades as an advocate for Chinese inclusion in Howard County schools and the local health care system. As a leader in the community, Dr. Li served as a board member and volunteer for the Asian American Healthcare Center for several years. He has worked tirelessly over the past two decades in advocating for the inclusion of Chinese language programs in the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) curriculum. Resulting from his leading efforts, there are currently seven high schools offering Chinese language courses to their students. As a cultural bridge builder, Dr. Li has also served as a consultant to the Howard County Library for the world language section of the Miller Branch. He has spear-headed Lunar New Year demonstrations and lectures for both Howard County schools and Howard County libraries to enhance cross-cultural exchange. The legacy of his influence benefits individuals across generations for a collective good that will reverberate across time.

The 2018 Human Rights Commission Award committee recognized the time, commitment, and compassion of Dr. Li. He has devoted his life to support those in need of health care with limited English Proficiency, as well as provide enriched opportunities for HCPSS students.

The Howard County Human Rights Commission is pleased to announce that **The Build Haiti Foundation** was selected as the recipient of the 2018 Organization Human Rights Award.

**The Build Haiti Foundation** seeks to partner with the Haitian community in Haiti, friends of Haiti, and the Haitian Diaspora. The foundation provides project management services, leadership development and fundraising support for infrastructural projects and community building efforts in Haiti. Additionally, the foundation coordinated with Folly Quarter Middle School regarding a service-learning project related to the impact of poverty on individual health and education. This Foundation has supported educational scholarships, highlighted the importance of global partnerships, and multi-cultural awareness which help make the world a better place. Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) students who participate in the Global Leadership and Global Citizenship programs, are better prepared and able to relate to the world with a greater perspective and understanding of how to become a true global citizen.

The 2018 Human Rights Commission Award committee recognized the commitment and compassion The Build Haiti Foundation has devoted to education, leadership, and public health involving and impacting Howard County students and residents.

## Human Rights Commission Community Outreach

### Community Conversation Circles

February 2018 – June 2018

Events were held in Columbia and Ellicott City, MD

Human Rights Commissioners and faith leaders from numerous communities organized Howard County's "Conversation Circles" – a four-part series conducted at six locations in the county. Persons from numerous faith communities in Howard County gathered to launch an effort to talk more honestly and openly about issues of race and racism. Locations where residents participated included St. John Baptist Church, Glen Mar United Methodist Church, Beth Shalom Congregation, St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Maryum Islamic Center, and Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia.

### Human Rights Day in Annapolis

March 13, 2018

Annapolis, MD

Low House Office Building

The Maryland Association of Human Relations/Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA), The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE), and the Civil Rights Coalition of Maryland sponsored Maryland Human Rights Day 2018 at the Low House Office Building in Annapolis MD. The theme was *Education Equity and Civil Rights* which featured advocacy updates, Legislator check-ins, panel discussions and guest speakers. OHR staff were involved in planning and implementing activities this day.

### Howard County Veterans' Fair

April 10, 2018

North Laurel Community Center

Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff participated in this annual event which provides local veterans the opportunity to meet with businesses and non-profit organizations dedicated to providing services, support and jobs to veterans. ALL veterans (active, guard and reserve) were invited to participate.

### Civil/Human Rights Forum with Dr. Joy DeGruy, International Lecturer, National and International Renowned Researcher, Educator and Author

May 7, 2018

Laurel, MD

North Laurel Community Center

Sponsored by OHR, Dr. DeGruy discussed the effects of post-traumatic slave syndrome in diverse communities and in the workplace.

### PFLAG's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fundraiser "Queens and Cocktails" at Historic Oakland Ballroom

May 10, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff attended and participated in this annual fundraiser, and provided literature, flyers of upcoming programs, and information to attendees.

### Harriet Tubman Day

September 15, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights Commissioners, MLK Commissioners and OHR staff distributed literature, shared information, and met with county residents to celebrate the historic landmark Harriet Tubman School building.

## Human Rights Commission Community Outreach (cont.)

### **HCPSS Educational Partnerships Celebration**

September 25, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff attended this county-wide event which highlighted community, business, and service agency partnerships which support HCPSS students, teachers, and families.

### **50+ Expo**

October 19, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff participated and distributed literature, answered questions, and met with residents during this annual event. Representatives from numerous agencies and organizations were available to speak with residents about resources to assist Howard County's senior population.

### **Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA)**

October 25, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights professionals, advocates, commissioners and supporters throughout the state met to discuss human rights laws, legislative bills and initiatives.

### **An evening of MOURNING & UNITY in remembrance of the lives lost at Tree of Life**

#### **Synagogue in Pittsburgh this past Shabbat**

October 29, 2018

Columbia, MD

Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff joined leaders of The Howard County Board of Rabbis, Jewish Federation of Howard County and Jewish Community Relations Council for an Interfaith Vigil, in remembrance of the lives lost at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh this past Shabbat. Friends of all ethnicities, cultures, faiths, genders and orientations joined together to mourn and comfort one another during this painful time.

### **Howard County Friends of Latin-America's Annual Potluck Dinner (FOLA)**

November 3, 2018

Columbia, MD

This annual event, co-sponsored with the Office of Human Rights, brought together residents and citizens from numerous countries to celebrate the diverse cultures, music, and traditions that make Howard County a great place to learn, live and work. Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff worked closely with members of FOLA during this 21st annual celebration. This year's theme was "Human Rights Have No Borders."

### **KWANZAA Celebration**

December 26, 2018

Columbia, MD

This annual event brought together community organizations, community leaders, children and families to celebrate a seven-day festival commemorating the African American people, their culture and their history.

## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission

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 Drive in Columbia, MD to formulate strategies for the annual commemoration of Dr. King in January.

County residents are continually requested to fill Commissioner vacancies and 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 at (410) 313-6430.

### MLK Commission Members

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## 2018 -2019 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Report

### Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration:

The Howard County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission presented its Annual Dr. King Holiday Celebration on Sunday, January 20, 2019 with a reception at 2:00 PM and the program at 3:00 PM. The event was held at Howard High School located at 8700 Old Annapolis Road; Ellicott City, Maryland 21043.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission was established in 1985 by order of the Howard County Executive, to encourage and coordinate appropriate ceremonies and activities throughout Howard County honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. legacy. On May 11, 2015, former County Executive Allan H. Kittleman amended the Executive Order 2014-05 updating the membership term for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Commissioners from two to five years. The Commission meets once a month at 9820 Patuxent Woods Drive; Columbia, MD 21046, at which time; strategies are formulated for the forthcoming January commemoration ceremonies for Dr. King.

This year's program theme was ***"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."*** The Commission promoted this theme throughout the year by taking part in multiple county events. The 2018/2019 celebration highlighted the talents of our local youth and public-school students and was well attended by the community at large. A reception was held prior to the celebration in the school auditorium and refreshments were served for those who attended. The Howard County National Honor Society Students acted as ushers and servers for the celebration and reception. Remarks were given by County Executive Calvin Ball, County Council Chair Christiana Mercer Rigby, Human Rights Administrator Dr. Barbara J. Sands and Commission Chair Roberta Kelly.

### Living the Dream Award:

The Living the Dream Award is a special part of the celebration as it recognizes an individual and an organization that demonstrates and promotes the teachings and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through community involvement. The Living the Dream Committee was tasked with the responsibility of reading through the many nominations submitted and to select a winner. This year's individual winner was Rev. Sandra Trice Gray and this year's organization winner was Asbury United Methodist Church of Jessup, Maryland.

### Student Essay Award:

The Essay Committee was tasked with organizing the school wide essay contest for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration. Students were encouraged to participate in the essay contest so they could see the importance of Dr. King's vision in today's times. They were asked to ***"write an essay describing a time when you spoke up for that which was right, and tell us about your experience and how it relates to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."***

#### High School Winners:

First Place	Allison Alston	11 <sup>th</sup> grade	Reservoir High School
Second Place	Chimmuanya Iheanyi-Igwe	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Howard High School
Third Place	Amen Owusu	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	Wilde Lake High School

**Middle School Winners:**

First Place	Nehemiah Lewis	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Harper's Choice Middle School
Second Place	Teniola Taiwo	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Murray Hill Middle School
Third Place	Reema Ayache	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Clarksville Middle School





## Day of Service, January 21, 2019:

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration continued Monday, January 21, 2019. Our Day of Service Kick-Off started at 8:00 AM at the Howard County Community Resources Campus located at 9820 Patuxent Woods Drive; Columbia, Maryland. There were multiple volunteer service projects and volunteer activities held throughout the county and the theme was **“A Day On, Not A Day Off.”** MLK Commission Chairperson Roberta Kelly, County Executive Calvin Ball, County Council Chairperson Christiana Mercer Rigby, and Human Rights Administrator Dr. Barbara Sands gave the opening remarks and the bell was sounded to indicate the start of the annual Day of Service activities.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission in collaboration with the Volunteer Center Serving Howard County reported that more than 429 volunteers engaged in more than 966 hours of service with 28 local agencies. Some of the projects included:

- The Columbia Art Center and Howard County’s Office of Aging and Independence utilized 44 volunteers to create 183 small crafts and other arts and craft projects for senior citizens.
- HopeWorks “I Can, I Will Stop Abuse Workshop generated 21 volunteers with 84 volunteer hours.
- Glen Mar United Methodist Church had 106 volunteers packing meals for the homeless, decorating cookies, writing letters, and making crafts contributed 471 volunteer hours.
- Volunteer Center Serving Howard County clipped and sorted \$6333 worth of coupons for military service members to use at their military bases. They had a total of 57 volunteers volunteering over 100+ hours.
- Hands only CPR, AED, Stop the Bleed and Fall Prevention training was offered by the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, Office of the Fire Marshal. Thirty-four volunteers contributed to 136 hours of training.

There were many offsite volunteer opportunities throughout the County. Dr. MLK Commission contributed to over 152 volunteers contributed 265 hours collecting 6,513 pounds of non-perishable food items at grocery stores and diapers to be delivered to the Howard County Food Bank. The Howard County Public School’s National Honor Society Students volunteered 20 students for 180 hours of community service hours. Maryland Live volunteers and staff donated 200+ volunteer hours serving 100 meals to residents and families at the Grassroots homeless shelter. Chesapeake Restore had 8 volunteers who contributed over 23 hours restocking and shopping at their store. This year the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Day of Service with the help and support of Volunteer Howard County sponsored over 25 events with more than 454 volunteers who volunteered over 1,091+ volunteer hours.



Left to Right:  
Mike Steward, Meghan Cusack, Marcela Burbano, MD LIVE GM Travis Lamb,  
MD LIVE Chef Jose Rivera, Howard County Executive Calvin Ball, Candice  
Davis, Keenan Smith, Dr. MLK Commission, Chairperson Roberta Kelly,  
Tonette Hickman

## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Community Outreach

### Community Conversation Circles

February 2018 – June 2018

Various locations throughout the county

Community members were invited to attend “Conversation Circles” conducted at six locations in the county. Persons of faith in Howard County — Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Unitarian Universalist, and others, gathered to launch an effort to talk more honestly and openly about issues of race and racism. Locations to participate in this county-wide initiative included St. John Baptist Church, Glen Mar United Methodist Church, Beth Shalom Congregation, St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Maryum Islamic Center, and Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia.

### Human Rights Day in Annapolis

March 13, 2018

The Maryland Association of Human Relations/Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA), The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE), and the Civil Rights Coalition of Maryland sponsored Maryland Human Rights Day 2018 at the Lowe House Office Building in Annapolis MD. The theme was *Education Equity and Civil Rights* and featured advocacy updates, legislator check-ins, panel discussions and guest speakers. OHR staff were involved in planning and implementing this occasion.

### Civil/Human Rights Forum with Dr. Joy DeGruy, International Lecturer, National and International Renowned Researcher, Educator and Author

May 7, 2018

Laurel, MD

North Laurel Community Center

Sponsored by OHR, Dr. DeGruy discussed the effects of post-traumatic slave syndrome in diverse communities and in the workplace.

### Harriet Tubman Day

September 15, 2018

Columbia, MD

HRC Commissioners, MLK Commissioners and OHR staff distributed literature, shared information, and met with county residents to celebrate the historic landmark Harriet Tubman School building.

### Domestic Violence Awareness Training

September 17, 2019

Howard County Police Department, OHR and LOKA- League of Korean Americans held an awareness training on Domestic Violence for the Korean Americans Community. The presentation was given by the Howard County Police Officer Bonita Alicea and was translated in Korean by members of LOKA.

### ATFA – American Turkish Friendship Association Interfaith Meeting

October 17, 2018

ATFA – American Turkish Friendship Association held an interfaith meeting for the Howard County community - "A Stranger in our Midst" to discuss the issues immigrants and refugees are facing in this country. The panel speakers were a Muslim leader, a pastor and a rabbi and it was a great discussion and a well-attended event.

## **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Community Outreach (cont.)**

### **Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Conference**

Oct 26, 2018

This conference was held at the Howard Community College to bring awareness in the community about the Human Trafficking and its prevention. Multiple organizations, advocates and the heroes – the survivors of Human trafficking, were on the panel and it was well-attended conference. Many workshops were held for the attendees and some specifically for the law enforcement.

### **Honoring Howard County's Black Pioneers**

November 3, 2018

This event recognizes, celebrates and honors those who forged a path for the future generations -- the black pioneers of the Howard County. They were awarded certificates honoring their work.

### **Howard County Friends of Latin-America's Annual Potluck Dinner (HoCoFOLA)**

November 3, 2018

Columbia, MD

This annual event, co-sponsored with the Office of Human Rights, brings together residents and citizens from numerous countries to celebrate the diverse cultures, music, and traditions that make this county a great place to learn, live and work. Human Rights Commissioners and OHR staff worked closely with members of FOLA during this 21st annual celebration in Howard County. This year's theme was "Human Rights Have No Borders."

### **Annual Early Thanksgiving Dinner and Interfaith Celebration of Peace**

November 15, 2018

American Turkish Friendship Association (ATFA) and Rumi Forum of Maryland held an Annual "Early Thanksgiving Dinner and Interfaith Celebration of Peace. This year's Early Thanksgiving Dinner was dedicated to 'caring for our community' featuring the Rise Against Hunger.

### **Religion & Reasonable Accommodations in the Workplace Awareness Training**

December 12, 2018

MCCR and COVE provided this training for the religious accommodations and inclusion at workplace.

### **KWANZAA Celebration**

December 26, 2018

Columbia, MD

This annual event brings together community organizations, community leaders, children and families to celebrate a seven-day festival commemorating the African American people, their culture and their history.

### **MLK Holiday Celebration**

January 20, 2019 and January 21, 2019

This event was held to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and to bring the community together to celebrate his ideologies.