

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



★ EXTRA ★★

**FAIR HOUSING MOVEMENT MARCHES ON:
HONORS PAST,
PLANS FUTURE!**

NATIONAL FAIR HOUSING ALLIANCE
- "Americans glimpsed their first genuine
ray of reasonable hope for housing fairness
just days following one of their
darkest hours." This
quote from the



Fair Housing Center
of West Michigan

2007 Fair Housing Trends Report
reflects the birth of a movement
and the resounding significance
of the Fair Housing Act, passed
just seven days after the
assassination of Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. in 1968.

Fair Housing Center of West Michigan

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Letter from Nancy Haynes Executive Director, Fair Housing Center of West Michigan

Extra! Extra! Read All About It! Fair Housing Center of West Michigan Honors Past, Plans Future!

The year 2008 marked the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Fair Housing Act and the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Fair Housing Act Amendments. The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan (FHCWM) dedicated the year to honoring these bold laws and the courageous people who worked and suffered to make their promise a reality. Instead of merely reflecting over past achievements, the FHCWM also used the 40th anniversary as an opportunity to challenge itself to work harder to make housing choice a reality before the passage of 40 more years.

In 2008, FHCWM Staff and Board Members developed new programming to increase awareness about fair housing laws and the services offered by the FHCWM. For the 21st year, the FHCWM brought the community together to discuss the systemic nature and the pervasive impact of housing discrimination during its *Annual Fair Housing Luncheon and Workshop Series*. During the fall, the FHCWM built upon the initial success of two new initiatives, hosting the second annual *Friends of Fair Housing Luncheon* and the *Lakeshore Friends of Fair Housing Breakfast*. In addition, FHCWM Staff started a Fair Housing Book Club wherein the public was invited to join staff in discussing books and other forms of media with fair housing themes over brown bag lunches. These sessions were well received in both Holland and Grand Rapids. The events, as well as the Book Club, successfully exposed new audiences to fair housing themed topics thereby expanding the reach of the FHCWM.

FHCWM Staff greatly expanded its fair housing technical training capacity in 2008 and provided training to a record number of housing industry personnel, social service agency staff and the general public. FHCWM Staff retooled existing fundamental fair housing training for real estate professionals and property management professionals and developed new trainings on advertising under the Fair Housing Act and fair lending. FHCWM Staff also devoted a great deal of time and energy in 2008 to establishing new relationships and to strengthening existing community collaborations and partnerships by attending meetings, seminars, conferences and other educational events.

As a result of the trainings and educational events hosted and attended by the FHCWM, the number of requests for information and service in 2008 greatly increased. The FHCWM received a record number of housing discrimination complaints, and filed more cases with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) than any other year in its history. Due to the explosion of discriminatory internet advertising against families with children, FHCWM Staff resources shifted to work with the industry and the government to address this emerging problem and to find lasting solutions. The FHCWM subsequently emerged as a leader in addressing internet housing discrimination across the nation.

A major 2008 milestone was the fact that the FHCWM was able to pay off its construction loan for its office building at 20 Hall Street SE. As for the future, the FHCWM Staff and board have a strong focus on the activities and efforts necessary to achieve the promise of the Fair Housing Act. The FHCWM also has the vision necessary to make housing choice a reality and thanks to the support of the community and industry partners, we have the resources to move west Michigan forward.

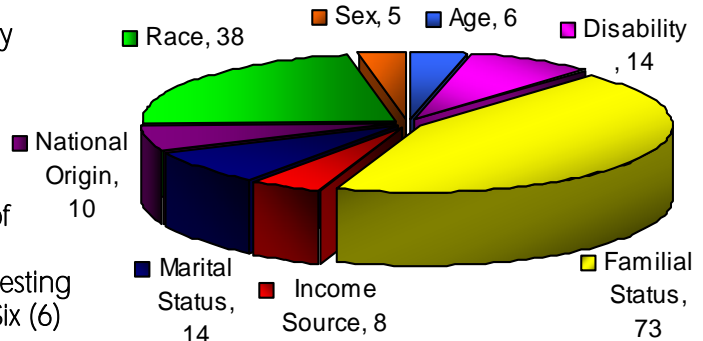
COMPLAINTS - During the 2008 calendar year, the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan handled 168 complaints of illegal housing discrimination, the highest number in its 28 year history. These complaints were filed on the following bases: age (6), disability (14), familial status (73), income source (8), marital status (14), national origin (10), race (38) and sex (5). Of the 168 complaints, 106 were initiated by the FHCWM and the remaining 62 were registered by individual clients.

The FHCWM initiated complaints against 22 different properties where testing had revealed evidence of race based discrimination. The FHCWM conducted follow-up testing for 17 of those 22 complaints. Six (6) sites revealed evidence of further discrimination, and the remaining 11 revealed no significant difference in the treatment of the testers. Nine (9) of the 11 cases revealing no significant difference were closed. The remaining 13 complaints initiated by the FHCWM on the basis of race remain open and under investigation.

The remaining 84 complaints initiated by the FHCWM resulted from discriminatory advertisements discovered by FHCWM staff in print and online advertising sources. Throughout 2008, the FHCWM identified over 60 advertisements which contained discriminatory phrases, primarily against families with children. For each of these advertisements, the FHCWM filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to ensure that the discriminatory practices cease and that those parties involved receive fair housing training in order to prevent future violations. To date, 34 complaints have been resolved and 22 people have received training.

The 62 complaints filed by individual clients were on the following bases: age (3), disability (13), familial status (11), income source (5), marital status (6), national origin (9) and race (15). As of the end of 2008, half of these complaints had been resolved and the rest remained open and under investigation. Through research, investigation, mediation and resolution, the FHCWM helped 9 clients with the granting of reasonable accommodation or modification requests, assisted one landlord in renting a home by mediating with a neighbor that had engaged in discriminatory harassment, and contributed to 3 clients overcoming a discriminatory practice to obtain safe, affordable housing.

Number of 2008 Complaints by Basis



HIGHLIGHTED CASES - In 2008, the FHCWM processed several cases that required special attention and time because of the nature and extent of the discrimination that had occurred. In each case, the FHCWM successfully worked with the client to obtain their desired resolution. Of these cases, the FHCWM highlighted the following:

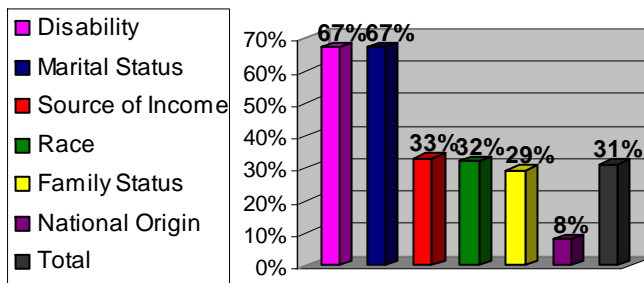
Complaint 08-041: A couple was denied the opportunity to rent because they had a child. The FHCWM conducted testing which confirmed the couples' claim of familial status discrimination, and served as evidence for HUD to charge the complaint. The couple was awarded punitive damages.

Complaint 08-058: A woman was being charged a monthly pet deposit for her service animals. The FHCWM helped the woman with a reasonable accommodation request which was granted and the fees were waived.

Complaint 08-107: The bylaws of a condominium association prohibited unrelated individuals from living together. The FHCWM met with the association, explained that the bylaws violated the marital status provision of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, and then referred them to an attorney who worked with them to revise their bylaws.

TESTING - Under its contracts for Fair Housing Services in 2008, the FHCWM conducted 318 matched pair tests in over 20 cities throughout west Michigan in order to survey, identify and address practices of illegal housing discrimination. Of these tests, 67 were conducted in response to individual complaints filed by clients, and the remaining 251 were conducted as market research to survey the status of fair housing within west Michigan. The sites for the survey tests were determined by the Executive Director and the Enforcement Director of the FHCWM based upon past complaints, past testing and/or other market or community research. The FHCWM conducted the tests on the following bases: age (1), disability (6), familial status (36), source of income (13), marital status (4), national origin (14), race (241) and sex (3). Although the highest rates of evidence of housing discrimination were found to be on the bases of disability and marital status, the FHCWM uncovered 72 instances of housing discrimination based upon race. Thus, in frequency, and hence in practice, race proves to be the most common basis of housing discrimination in west Michigan.

Rates of Evidence in 2008 Testing by Basis



2008 Education and Outreach Data

The FHCWM maintains that education and outreach services play an equally important role to enforcement services in the fight against illegal housing discrimination. Education and outreach services provide housing consumers the awareness necessary to recognize and assert their fair housing rights and also empower the housing industry with the knowledge of the law in order to prevent future fair housing violations. To that end, throughout 2008 the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan provided comprehensive fair housing education and outreach services to over 30,000 people throughout west Michigan. These services included three trainings for social service agencies, 3 major events hosted by the FHCWM, 26 trainings for members of the housing industry, and over 36 other meetings and events that FHCWM staff attended to provide education and outreach. As a result of these efforts, the FHCWM empowered over 5,600 people throughout west Michigan with knowledge of fair housing rights and laws. The FHCWM also spread awareness of fair housing through the development, publishing, and distribution of fair housing materials, including brochures, newspaper articles, newsletters, etc., to over 25,000 people.

21st Annual Luncheon and Workshop Series Fair Housing Movement Marches On: Honors Past, Plans Future

The *21st Annual Fair Housing Luncheon and Workshop Series* took place on April 30, 2008 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This event began with four morning workshops entitled *Seniors at Risk: Housing Discrimination Limits Options for Senior Citizens*, *Causes & Effects: Current Fair Housing Cases and Implications for Our Community*, *Why Fair Housing Matters: The High Costs of Housing Discrimination*, and *Fair Housing Best Practices & Applications: Partnering with the Housing Industry*. These workshops were attended by 120 people and were very well received.

The Luncheon began with opening remarks by Doretha Ardoin (FHCWM Board President/Realtor, Coldwell Banker AJS-Schmidt) and then led into the presentation of the 2008 Fair Housing Awards. The "Fair Housing Award for an Outstanding Individual" was awarded to Joel Dye of the City of Holland, and the "Fair Housing Award for an Outstanding Organization" was presented to the Michigan Association of REALTORS, which was accepted by then President Jeff Young. Mr. Young was also co-chair of the 2008 Membership Drive, so after accepting the award he kicked off the 2008 membership drive.

Following the award ceremony, Nancy Haynes, Executive Director of the FHCWM, introduced keynote speakers Shanna Smith and Cat Cloud of the National Fair Housing Alliance. Ms. Cloud provided a brief summary of the history of the fair housing movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s involvement and the importance of the 40th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act in 2008. Following, Ms. Smith addressed the foreclosure crisis, provided local data on race, neighborhood composition and high cost loans. Ms. Smith called for change, saying "we have to stop all owner-occupied home foreclosures for six months" and asked the audience to take action by contacting elected officials. The luncheon was attended by over 350 individuals and was a great success!

Lakeshore Friends of Fair Housing

The Fair Housing Center hosted its 2nd annual *Lakeshore Friends of Fair Housing* breakfast event on Tuesday, September 10, 2008, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Holland, filling all 85 available seats. The event was supported by the West Michigan Association of Realtors, Chemical Bank, Bank of America, Bank of Holland and Huntington Bank for a total of \$3,450 in sponsorship dollars. Keynote speaker David Rusk was very well-received as he spoke about the impact of segregation on our communities and the importance of collaborating regionally to effectively combat illegal housing discrimination. The FHCWM also provided a fair housing training for sales professionals immediately following the breakfast. This two-hour training was approved for 2 Michigan State Continuing Education credits and was attended by four realtors.

Friends of Fair Housing: Voices for Justice

The Fair Housing Center hosted its 2nd annual *Friends of Fair Housing* luncheon on Wednesday, October 8, 2008, at the West Michigan University Graduate Center in Grand Rapids with a total of 220 guests in attendance. This event, entitled *Friends of Fair Housing: Voices for Justice*, featured keynote speaker Dr. Dennis Preston. Dr. Preston is the preeminent national expert on linguistic profiling. His speech was an engaging, interactive presentation which demonstrated how the perception of a person's language, accent and/or pronunciations are not always reality. Dr. Preston explained that these perceptions lead to assumptions about a person's race, level of education, gender, etc. and that these assumptions often lead to differences in treatment, including housing discrimination.

During this event, the FHCWM also presented its "Fair Housing Advocate Awards" to the following two very committed individuals who have worked with the FHCWM to further fair housing: Kate Pew Wolters, a lifetime community leader, philanthropist, and social justice advocate; and Jim Wilson, a distinguished leader in the property management industry and FHCWM Board Member.

Fair Housing Book Club

The Fair Housing Center initiated its Fair Housing Book Club in August 2008 in order to raise awareness of fair housing-related issues and to help define their impact on west Michigan communities. The books and movies chosen highlighted personal and/or true stories with fair housing implications. For each novel, the FHCWM held a fruitful discussion session both in Grand Rapids and in Holland. The following novels were highlighted at the 2008 Fair Housing Book Clubs: "*Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights and Murder in the Jazz Age*," by Kevin Boyle; and "*A Stronger Kinship: One Town's Extraordinary Story of Hope and Faith*," by Anna-Lisa Cox. The final Book Club of the year featured the film, "Race: The Power of Illusion."

Housing Fair Housing Capital Campaign

The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan has completed over 80% of its *Housing Fair Housing Capital Campaign*, and plans to complete the entire Campaign by summer 2009. The \$1,025,287.50 raised thus far goes toward the goal of \$1,250,000 set in order to fund the renovation of a former Bank One Branch office into the new home of the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan. The new office has brought the FHCWM increased capacity to provide fair housing services, improved accessibility, and greater visibility. For example, the FHCWM has offered use of its new meeting room to over 100 different groups, greatly increasing awareness of fair housing and the potential for partnership and collaboration. An additional growth in capacity, the new office has allowed the staff of the FHCWM to expand to four full time positions and has also afforded the space necessary to house interns. As a result, the FHCWM has been able to better meet the growing demand for fair housing services in its expanded service area which includes Kent and 10 surrounding counties.

The FHCWM is very thankful to its donors to this campaign which have allowed for an extensive increase in capacity and services offered by the FHCWM. These donors include more than 8 local non-profit organizations, 15 local foundations, 40 local corporations and businesses, and 150 local individuals. Each donor that pledged \$100 or more to the Capital Campaign will be recognized on the Donor Wall. Local artist Mary Kullema, of Kullema Pottery, has designed the Donor Wall as a "mosaic alcove" for the greeting area of the office of the FCHWM. It will be composed of beautifully glazed terra cotta tiles embossed with the names of donors. The wall design shows the FHCWM logo, an open door and window, which represent the FHCWM's mission to eliminate practices of housing discrimination and promote diverse, open communities through education and advocacy.



2008 Membership Drive

Thanks to all the generous support received throughout the year we met our 2008 Membership Goal and raised \$9,000 for FHCWM programs!

Supporting Members

Bill Lewis	Marilyn Titche
Fred Mackraz	Kate Pew Wolters

Corporate Members

Bank of America	Hope Network
Byron Bank	Independent Bank
Chemical Bank	John Hunting and Associates
Dietool Engineering Co., Inc.	MCT and Company
DVK Construction	Mika Meyers Beckett and Jones
Eastern Floral and Gifts	Red Oak Management Co., Inc.
EnviroSafe Inc.	Smith Diamond Realty
Goodrich Quality Theaters	Steelcase, Inc.
Habitat for Humanity of Kent County	The Grand Rapids Press
HBAGGR	Triangle Associates

Business Members

Anderson Contracting and Renovations, LLC	Heartland Builders LLC
Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan	Holland Human Relations Commission
Audu Real Estate, Inc.	Holland Rescue Mission
Bayberry Apartments, LLC	Home Repair Services of Kent County
Bos and Glazier, PLC	ICCF - HFS
Bucovina Embroidery and Design	Kent County Commission
Clare Wade Communications	Management Business Solutions
Compass Property Management, LLC	Neighborhood Ventures
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services	New Development Corporation
Draper Group	Professional Administrative Resources
Fairbanks Townhouses	Re/Max Grand Valley
Fishladder, Inc.	Rental Property Owners Association
Fountain Street Church	Salvation Army Booth Family Services
Genesis Non-Profit Housing Corp.	State Farm Insurance - Koorndyk Agency
Good Samaritan Ministries	West Michigan Minority Contractors
Grand Rapids Study Club	Association

MEMBERS

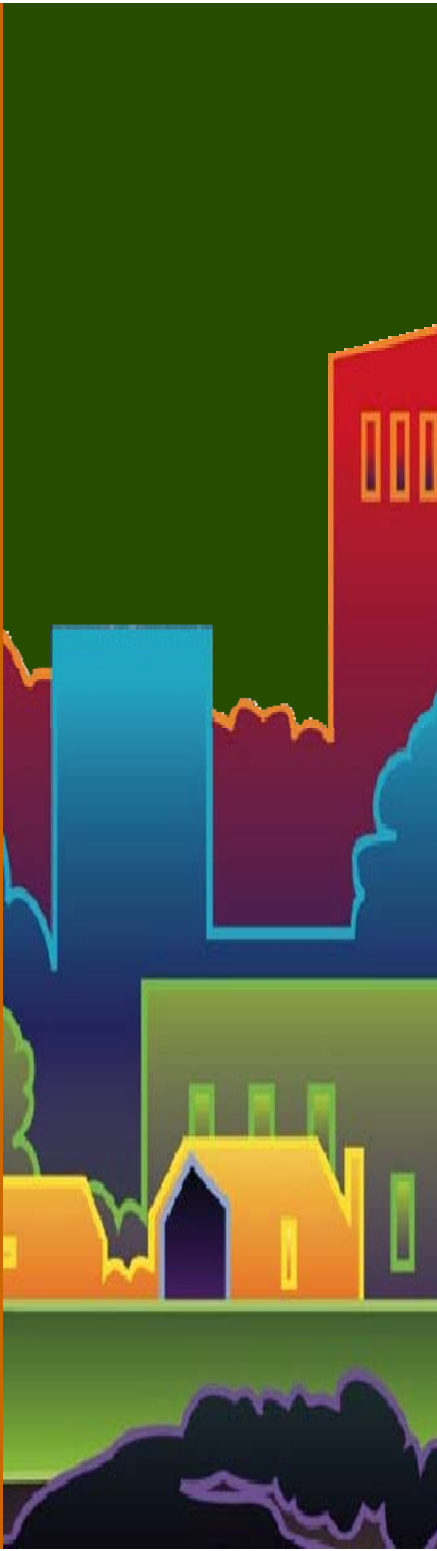
MEMBERS

Individual Members

Joseph Amy
Thomas Appel
Peter & Glenna Armstrong
Michael & Hilary Arthur
Sophie Baker
Stephanie Gingerich & Tony Baker
Rebecca London & Mary Banghart
Glenn Barkan
Judy Barnes
Deb Barton
Dave Bee
Kay & Larry Behrenwald
Michelle Behrenwald
Kathryn Remlinger & Robert Bell
Louis Berra
Valerie & Howard Best
Guy & Kim Bickford
Bert Bleke
Roman & Connie Bohatch
Martha & Michael Boks
Peter & Janet Borgdorff
Jonathan & Grace Bradford
Brenda Brame
Otto Brannum
Susan Broman
Jim & Donna Brooks
Jim & Kitty Buck
David & Gwen Buday
Melissa Budzynski & David Bulkowski
George & Nancy Buth
Nan Carroll
Marquettia Clinkscales
Evelyn Columbus
Kay Courtney
Suzanne Cox
Laurie & Crawford Craft
Joe Czarnik
David Czurak
Marc Daneman
Regina M. Davis
Thomas Davis
Dawn DeCamp
Eric & Sharai DeLong
Jocelyn Dettloff
Janis & Jeffrey DeVree

Mark & Lisa DeVries
John & Sheila Doherty
Daryl Domke
Doug Donnell
Judy Poll-Droste & Tom Droste
Lynnanne Phillips & Joe Dulin
Bob Dunn
Joel & Erin Dye
Congressman Vernon Ehlers
DeDe Esque
Ed Farnham
Alaina Furr
Joan & Larry Gardner
Jorge Gonzalez
Mashonda Griffin
Dan Grzywacz
Gail Harrison
Ira Hart
Kurt Hassberger
Barbara Haynes
Bryan Bickford & Nancy Haynes
Lisa Hickman
Jack & Rebecca Hoffman
Mary & Mike Hogan
Tony Travis & Jeannie Hosey
Phil Hoskin
Kim & Gregg Hughes
Alan & Elly Hulst
Win & Kyle Irwin
David & Lois Jacobs
Ed & Kristine Jaros
Ora & Courtney Jones
Bart Jonker
Lisabeth Keegan
Sharon & Scott Koop
Ronald & Bonnie Kopp
Mark & Amy Kornelis
Susan Lewis
Eric & Mary Libby
Benjamin H. Logan
Tom & Anne Logan
Rhonda Lubberts
Elizabeth & Jerry Lykins
Bill & Pam Manus
Marie Marfia
Sireece Martin

Edgar Omar Marty
David & Yvonne May
David & Connie Medema
Ali & Matt Meier
Debra Muller
Bill & Paula Murphy
Peter Oberliesen
Joe & Marie Parzych
Marcia Penn
H. Rhett & Jeralyn Pinsky
Paul Potter
Carol & Dennis Preston
Debra Quade
Lindsey & Rodney Reames
Tony & Carolyn Roussey
Pastor Jay & Teri Schrimpf
Margaret Sieh
Edward Smith
Ruth Stegeman
Ruth Stevens & Thomas Stellard
Bill & Judy Stellan
Dave & Marcy Stellan
Richard & Mary Stevens
Robert & Anne Stoddard
David Stringer
Kathleen Feeney & John Stuiwe
Deborah & Dennis Sturtevant
Jerome & Judith Subar
Denise Suerth
Jim & Sue Swanlund
Peg Sylvester
Louise Thomas
Carol Townsend
David Tweedie
Rudy & Nancy Vandonk
Lynn Heemstra & William Vanvugt
Andrew Stoddard & Elizabeth Vezino
Lori Vinson
Pat Vredevoogd
Karla Walker
Michael Walton
Larry & Lee Nelson Weber
Lois White Tomasiewicz
Jim Winslow
John & Mary Zinkand
Wendy Zuidema
David Baak & Betty Zylstra

A stylized, colorful illustration of a cityscape. It features various buildings in shades of green, red, blue, and yellow, set against a dark background. The style is graphic and modern, with bold outlines and flat colors.

Executive Board of Directors

PRESIDENT, Doretha Ardoin, Coldwell Banker Schmidt
VICE PRESIDENT, Tim Reimink, Crowe Horwath
TREASURER, Valerie Best, Concrete Cutting & Breaking, Inc.
SECRETARY, Sharon Smith, Aquinas College

Board of Directors

Michelle Behrenwald, Inspired Design
Dave Bulkowski, Disability Advocates
Ron Eberhardt, 1-800-GOT-JUNK? - Metro Grand Rapids
Floriza Genautis, Management Business Solutions
Ira Hart, Consumers Energy
Dan Koorndyk, State Farm Insurance
Hon. Benjamin Logan, 61st District Court
Patrick Lonergan, Fifth Third Bank
Fred Mackraz, Kuiper Orlebeke, PC
Barbara Palombi, Grand Valley State University
Suzanne Schulz, City of Grand Rapids
Margaret Sieh, Community Activist
Dave Stellin, Bank of America
Jim Wilson, Noble Property Management

Lakeshore Advisory Board

PRESIDENT, Dave Stellin, Bank of America
Deb Barton, Chemical Bank-Southwest Region
Curt Carini, Carini & Associates Realtors
Phil Coray, Alliance for Cultural & Ethnic Harmony
Bob Dunn, Keller Williams Realty Holland
Joel Dye, City of Holland-Community Development Department
Jorge Gonzalez, Macatawa Bank
Gail Harrison, Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance
Leroy Hernandez, Latin Americans United for Progress
Bart Jonker, Lake Michigan Financial Corporation
Mark Kornells, Ottawa County Community Action Agency
Mary Libby, SRC Mortgage
Al Serrano, Holland Human Relations Commission
Ruth Stegeman, Disability Network - Lakeshore
Amber VerBurg, Safe Title, Inc.
Karla Walker, The Huntington National Bank

Staff

Nancy Haynes, Executive Director
Liz Keegan, Director of Education and Outreach
Elizabeth Vezino, Director of Advocacy
Lucia Belassi, Test Coordinator
Reverend David May, Senior Project Coordinator

*Eliminating practices of illegal housing
discrimination and promoting diverse, open
neighborhoods through education and advocacy.*



Fair Housing Center of West Michigan

20 Hall Street SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Tel: (616) 451-2980 or 1-866-389-FAIR

Fax: (616) 451-2657

E-mail: contact-us@fhcwm.org

Website: www.fhcwm.org

Serving the Michigan counties of Allegan, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Mecosta,
Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa