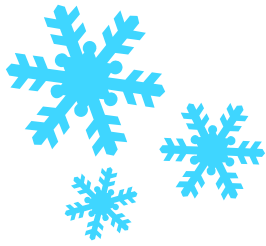


Winter 2012



# FAIR HOUSING NEWS

Produced by the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan

## Finding the Way to Fair Housing

### Fair Housing Center Plans 25th Annual Event for April 18, 2012

The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan is very pleased to announce that the Executive Director of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center, James Perry, will be the keynote speaker for the *25th Annual Fair Housing Luncheon & Workshop Series* on **Wednesday, April 18, 2012** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The theme for the event is “*Finding the Way to Fair Housing.*”



The FHCWM will again offer three concurrent morning workshops at 8:45 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. The Luncheon begins promptly at 12:00 p.m.

Mr. Perry will share information on the systemic lessons learned from the fair housing work they are conducting in the greater New Orleans area, including a recently filed lawsuit against St. Bernard Parish alleging that the permissive use permit process adopted by the Parish in 2006 is racially discriminatory in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

Mr. Perry is an expert in affordable housing and housing discrimination. He founded the Gulf Coast Fair Housing Center in Mississippi when he was only 26 years old. He led the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) through

two of America’s greatest disasters - Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. GNOFHAC is a private, non-profit civil rights organization established in the summer of 1995 to eradicate housing discrimination throughout the greater New Orleans area.

The FHCWM is planning three comprehensive and timely workshops that build on the theme of the difficulties individuals and communities face in finding the way to fair housing in today’s housing market.

Accessible housing is rare and tends to be limited to certain areas within communities. The first workshop, **Accessible Housing for All**, will provide information on the barrier to and need for accessible housing, especially in light of our aging population. The workshop will also provide information on universal design and visitability standards, as well as practical guidance and best practices in creating communities for people of all ages and abilities. This workshop will be anchored by a presentation from nationally renowned fair housing attorney Michael Allen, of Relman, Dane & Colfax and is made possible through the support of the Kent County Senior Millage.



One of the central objectives of the Fair Housing Act when Congress enacted it in 1968 was the deliberate promotion of residential integration and the creation of truly and balanced living patterns. Nevertheless, more than 40 years later, Michigan remains highly segregated and housing discrimination continues to be a problem. The second workshop, **Creating**

**& Sustaining Inclusive Communities**, will highlight the variety of systemic barriers that deny people access to housing within a community, be it through discriminatory policies, ordinances, zoning decisions or community biases as well as share information on action steps and solutions. The workshop will feature a presentation from the Senior Vice President of the National Fair Housing Alliance, Cat Cloud.

The third workshop, **Overcoming Obstacles to Developing & Purchasing Homes**, will focus on the obstacles that individuals are facing as they seek to purchase a home in today’s market as well as challenges facing communities that are looking to rebuild housing. This workshop will also build on the groundwork laid in previous workshops looking at the foreclosure crisis as communities see record numbers of vacant housing that is not being well maintained. Panel members include Shanti Abedin, Enforcement and Hurricane Relief Project Coordinator of the National Fair Housing Alliance, and Steve Dane, Partner at Relman, Dane & Colfax.



# ...FHCWM Notes & News...

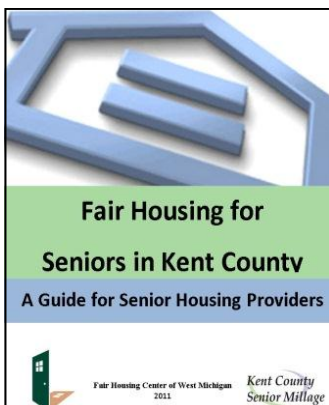
## Community Foundation of Holland/ Zeeland Area Youth Advisory Grant

The FHCWM staff is very pleased to announce a \$3,920 grant for Fair Housing Education for Families with Children. Beginning in 2007, the FHCWM found that the number of familial status-based complaints consistently surpassed those filed on any other basis—meaning that families with children in west Michigan have been experiencing significant barriers to housing choice and opportunity for at least 4 years. Therefore, the FHCWM partnered with the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) to bring their new fair housing curricula for school children to west Michigan and with the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance to reach families with children on the lakeshore. This project will include two reading sessions of *The Fair Housing Five & the Haunted House* (a children's book written and published by the GNOFHAC), one session of a Housing Choice Game workshop and 150 *The Fair Housing Five* books and fair housing materials distributed to families with children. This project is made possible by a grant from The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area's Youth Advisory Committee.

## Senior Report Released

The staff is also very pleased to announce the release of a new FHCWM report: "Fair Housing for Seniors in Kent County: A Guide for Senior Housing Providers." The report cites documentation of significant incidences of housing discrimination against Kent County seniors on the basis of race, national origin and disability both in housing practices and in senior housing advertising campaigns. As a result, the FHCWM found that one in every three minority seniors in Kent County may face unlawful housing discrimination. The report also contains extensive information on fair housing laws as they apply to seniors, and offers practical guidance and best practices for senior housing providers. The FHCWM conducted the fair

housing services detailed in the report through the support of the Kent County Senior Millage. Trainings and presentations of the information contained in the report are available. The report is on our website: [www.fhcwm.org](http://www.fhcwm.org).



## National Fair Housing News

**Washington, DC**—The Justice Department announced a lawsuit against the manager and owner of the Geneva Terrace Apartments in La Crosse, WI, alleging discrimination against African-Americans who were seeking to rent apartments at the complex. The complaint alleges that the manager and owner of Geneva Terrace told an African-American couple who were interested in renting an apartment that there were no apartments available, even though they had advertised vacancies. The couple found it suspicious and asked a white friend to contact the complex, who was told there were available apartments. The couple contacted the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council (MMFHC), which confirmed through testing that African Americans were told that apartments were not available when available apartments were shown to white persons. The lawsuit seeks an order prohibiting the defendants from engaging in future unlawful discrimination, payment of a civil penalty and monetary damages for the persons who were refused the opportunity to rent because of race.

## Local Fair Housing News

**Complaint #11-004** - The FHCWM received a complaint from a senior client seeking assistance in requesting a reasonable accommodation from the senior community where she resides. The client uses a motorized wheelchair due to mobility disabilities and needed to be able to park the chair in a location within a short distance from her car. The client and the FHCWM filed the case with MDCR after attempts to work directly with the management company were unsuccessful. With the help of MDCR, the accommodation was granted and the client is able to fully enjoy her home and community.



## Congratulations!

The FHCWM is proud to announce our newest member! **Jonah Stoddard** was born on December 10, 2011 to proud parents **Elizabeth Vezino Stoddard** (FHCWM Director of Advocacy) and **Andrew Stoddard**.

## 2012 Fair Housing Awards: Nominations Needed

It's that time of year again! Please consider submitting a nomination for an individual or organization for a Fair Housing Award to be presented at the April 18th luncheon. Selection is based upon a demonstrated commitment to fair housing. Please fill out the enclosed nomination form and return it to the FHCWM by **March 12, 2012**. You may submit more than one. Thank you to all of you who nominated such worthy community members in 2011 for the Fair Housing Award. We *really* value your input!



## **Fair Housing Center of West Michigan**

20 Hall Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

T: (616) 451-2980 or 1-866-389-FAIR  
F: (616) 451-2657

## FHCWM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Doretha Ardoin, President**  
*Coldwell Banker Schmidt Grand Rapids*  
**Tim Reimink, Vice President**  
*Crowe Horwath*  
**Valerie Best, Treasurer**  
*Concrete Cutting & Breaking, Inc.*  
**Sharon Smith, Secretary**  
*Aquinas College*  
**Michelle Behrenwald**  
*Inspired Design*  
**Dave Bulkowski**  
*Disability Advocates of Kent County*  
**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*  
**Dave Stellin**  
*First State Bank*  
**Troy Zapolski**  
*Land & Company*

# Thank You 2011 FHCWM Members

**THANK YOU SO MUCH to all of our 2011 members! Because of your generous support, we exceeded our 2011 Membership Goal of \$9,000 by raising \$12,426 for FHCWM education and outreach programs!**

## **Special Thanks to Our: Supporting Members**

- Mercantile Bank
- Kate Pew Wolters
- Marilyn Titche

## **Corporate Members**

- Aquinas College
- Bayberry Pointe Apartments
- Bob & Aleicia Woodrick
- Diversity Learning Center
- Chemical Bank
- Choice One Bank
- City of Grand Rapids Office of Diversity & Inclusion
- Dalton Township
- EnviroSafe Inc.
- Flagstar Bank
- Founders Bank & Trust
- Goodrich Quality Theaters
- Grand Rapids Press
- Heartland Builders
- HHI Management Company
- Home & Building Assoc. of Greater Grand Rapids
- Hope Network Foundation
- Keller Williams Realty
- Land & Co.
- Lee Kitson Builder, Inc
- MCT & Company
- Michigan Assoc. of Realtors
- New Development Corp.
- Red Oak Management
- Tazzia Lawn Care
- The Grand Rapids Times
- UDECON

## **Business Members**

- Allegan County Resource Development Committee
- Aquinas College
- Brookmeadow Apartments
- Burton's Landing Apartments
- City of Holland
- Compass Property Mgmt.
- Crossroads/Dunbar Apts
- Fieldstone Apartments
- Fishladder Inc.

- Fulton Street Farmers Market
- Good Samaritan Ministries
- Grand Rapids Family Credit Union
- Grand Rapids Housing Commission
- Grand Rapids Urban League
- Habitat for Humanity of Kent County
- High Pointe Apartments
- Ken Schmidt Productions
- Mill Pond Realty
- MSU College of Law Housing Law Clinic
- North Pointe Apartments
- Oakview Apartments
- Parkcrest Apartments
- Patriot Realty
- Peppercorn/Oakhill Apts
- Phoenix Properties
- Prairie Creek Apartments
- Professional Administrative Resources
- The Salvation Army Booth Family Services
- Tonya A. Fedewa PLC
- Well House
- Wimbledon/Heritage Apts
- Woodfield Apartments
- York Creek Apartments
- YWCA West Central MI

## **Individual Members**

- T. J. Appel
- Peter Armstrong
- Betty Zylstra & David Baak
- Jean Baird
- Sophie Baker
- Judy Barnes
- Angela Beasley-Melton
- Jane Beckering
- David Bee
- Michelle Behrenwald
- Kay Behrenwald
- Louis Berra
- Howard & Valerie Best
- Guy & Kim Bickford
- Nancy Haynes & Bryan Bickford
- Marie Bieber
- Bert Bleke
- Jennifer Boerman
- Roman & Connie Bohatch
- Susan Broman
- Jim & Donna Brooks
- James & Jeanine Bryant
- Jim & Kitty Buck
- David & Gwen Buday
- Mary Bueche
- Michelle Charette
- Cathy Cloud
- Tracie Coffman
- Robert & Ann Cooper
- Phil & Janeth Coray
- Kay Courtney
- Laurie & Crawford Craft
- Andrea Crumback
- Earl & Leslie Curry
- David Czurak
- Marc Daneman
- Roger & Janet DeYoung
- Doug & Dana Donnell
- Bob Dunn
- Joel & Erin Dye
- Ron Eberhardt
- David & Marilyn Fernstrum
- Emily Furrow
- Larry & Joan Gardner
- Floriza Genautis
- Michelle Gordon
- Daniel Grzywacz
- Mike & Pat Haines
- Gail Harrison
- Barbara Haynes
- George Heartwell
- Gail Gunst Heffner & Kenneth Heffner
- Carol Hennessy
- Terri Land & Dan Hibma
- Lisa Hickman
- David & Susan Hoekema
- Mary Hogan
- Preston Hopson, Jr.
- Philip Hoskins
- John Hunting
- Win & Kyle Irwin
- Courtney & Ora Jones
- Bart & Beth Jonker
- Liz Keegan
- Carl & Ruth Kelly
- Mark Kornelis
- Mike & Diane Kroll
- Valeri & Brian Lawson
- Eric & Mary Libby
- Benjamin & Denice Logan
- Tom & Anne Logan
- John H. Logie
- Rhonda Lubberts
- Elizabeth Lykins
- Larry & Peggy Magnesen
- Bill & Pam Manus
- Hedda Martin
- Harold Mast
- Lesley Mayer
- BriAnne & Kyle McKee

- Thomas & Janice McWhertor
- Dave Medema
- William B. & Paula Murphy
- Dr. Barbara Palombi
- Joe & Marie Parzych
- H. Rhett & Jeralyn Pinsky
- Dennis & Carol Preston
- Barbara Quinn-Corneil
- Rodney & Lindsey Reames
- Timothy Reimink
- Venesa Remo
- Julie Rockwell
- Rebecca Rynbrandt
- A. Jeffrey Schreur
- Jay & Teri Schrimpf
- Dean & Cheryl Schuch
- Joyce Sikora Lovse
- Linda Smith
- Sharon Smith
- Kym Spring
- Steven & Ruth Stegeman
- Ruth Stevens & Thomas Stellard
- Bill & Judy Stellin
- Dave & Marcy Stellin
- Richard & Mary Stevens
- Kathleen Feeney and John Stuiue
- Dennis & Deborah Sturtevant
- Jerome & Judith Subar
- Greg & Audrey Sundstrom
- Jim & Lawren Susan
- Jim & Sue Swanlund
- Hattie Tinney Beenen
- Marilyn Titche
- Carol Townsend
- Paul & Patricia Troost
- Lynn Heemstra & William VanVugt
- James Vaughn
- Wayne Veneklasen
- Amber VerBurg
- Elizabeth Vezino Stoddard
- Karla Walker
- Larry & Lee Nelson Weber
- Herb & Ann Weller
- Casey & Lucia White
- Claire Whitman
- James Wiersma
- Mike & Mary Alice Williams
- Kendra Wills
- Bob & Alecia Woodrick
- Troy & Kari Zapolski



# ...FHCWM News & Events...

## FHCWM Board & Staff Update

The FHCWM would like to thank Michelle Charette for her work as our Test Coordinator and wish her the best of luck on her adventures in New Zealand! The FHCWM is excited to welcome Gabe Chapla—our new Test Coordinator, Jean Baird—our new Administrative Assistant and Lydia VanRaalte—our new Education & Outreach Program Assistant!

The FHCWM would also like to thank Lakeshore Advisory Board Member **Deb Barton** for her many years of service and advocacy for fair housing along the lakeshore. *Thank you, Deb!*

## Save the Date!

**September 13, 2012**

Brian Copeland's show,  
*Not a Genuine Black Man*,  
is coming to Grand Rapids!

## Fair Housing Book Club

Upcoming discussions: **March 6th** in Grand Rapids and **March 8th** in Holland on Zeitoun by Dave Eggers. All meetings begin at 11:45 am. Locations: Holland at Disability Network (421 Century Lane); Grand Rapids at FHCWM (20 Hall SE). Bring a lunch & join us!

## Fair Housing Trainings

The Fair Housing Center offers fair housing trainings, including Fair Housing & Advertising, Fair Housing Training for Rental Professionals and Fair Lending sessions. Costs vary depending on the type of training. Each training is 3 hours and includes a comprehensive packet of reference materials.

Some sessions are held at the FHCWM office; we can also come to your location. Call Liz Keegan at (616) 451-2980 to learn more or register.

**Check our website home page for upcoming dates: [www.fhcwm.org](http://www.fhcwm.org).**

The FHCWM hosts two **tester trainings** each month. Testers are volunteers that play the role of a homeseeker and receive a stipend in return for their time and services. In order to accommodate differing schedules, one training will take place during business hours while the other will be held in the evening. For the specific training dates, to register, or any other questions contact Gabe Chapla at (616) 451-2980.

[www.fhcwm.org](http://www.fhcwm.org)  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF  
WEST MICHIGAN**  
20 Hall Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507



Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Permit No. 785