



# 2013 Annual Report

## Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission



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## **From the desk of the Executive Director**

Dear Community Leaders:

Cedar Rapids is a wonderful place to live, raise a family, and start a business. However, we cannot stop there. In order to be globally competitive we must make sure that Cedar Rapids is a place where all of its citizens can experience dignity, fairness, and the fruits of building a greater community now and for the next generation.

October 17, 2013 marked the 50th anniversary of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission and launched a year-long celebration designed to reflect on the past, celebrate our progress and strategize towards a truly welcoming and diverse Cedar Rapids that is “a vibrant urban hometown - a beacon for people and businesses invested in building a greater community now and for the next generation.” The celebration was set off with a proclamation by Mayor Ron J. Corbett recommitting our community “to equity and civil rights.” At the same time the Commission directed me to “begin a 180 day strategic/tactical planning process designed to affirmatively reach its organizational vision as articulated in Chapter 69.”

*“A Cedar Rapids Community that is welcoming, inclusive and preserves the personal dignity all people regardless of their age, color, creed, disability, familial status, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation so that we all may fulfill our productive capacities.”*

The Commission must proactively work to overcome historic patterns of segregation and discrimination in order to foster an inclusive community for all.

Starting in 2014 we will move towards a “community results model” that not only measures what we do but what has changed because we are doing it. The first step in this effort will be to release a baseline State of Equity in Cedar Rapids Report (April 2014) that begins the process of documenting where we are as a community so that we can make data-informed decisions about where we want to go and measure progress as we go there.

We do this because Cedar Rapids is a wonderful place to live, raise a family, and start a business BUT we must make sure that Cedar Rapids is also a place where all of its citizens can experience dignity, fairness, and the fruits of building a greater community now and for the next generation.

Sincerely,

John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013

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### **Civil Rights Commission 50th Anniversary Celebration**

October 17, 2013 marked the 50th anniversary of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission and launched a year-long celebration designed to reflect on the past, celebrate our progress and strategize towards a truly welcoming and diverse Cedar Rapids that is “a vibrant urban hometown - a beacon for people and businesses invested in building a greater community now and for the next generation.” The celebration was set off with a proclamation by Mayor Ron J. Corbett recommitting our community “to equity and civil rights” and to begin a year-long celebration of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission. Leaders from across the community participated in the event.

### **Hiring of a New Executive Director and Launch of the Strategic Planning Process**

In October 2013, the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission hired John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, MSW, as its new Executive Director.

In November 2013 the Commission directed its new Executive Director to begin a 180-day strategic/tactical planning process designed to affirmatively reach its organizational purpose as articulated in Chapter 69:

*“To secure for all individuals within the City of Cedar Rapids freedom from discrimination because of age, color, creed, disability, familial status, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in connection with employment, public accommodations, housing, credit, and education; and thereby to protect the personal dignity of these individuals, to ensure their full productive capacities, to preserve the public safety, health, and general welfare, and to promote the interests, rights, and privileges of individuals within the City of Cedar Rapids.”*

In late November 2013, the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission began its evaluative efforts to move towards a community results-based accountability model. As its first step, it convened six subcommittees to look at disproportionality in Cedar Rapids and Marion related to protected classes in the areas of:

- Economic Development (e.g.: poverty, wealth, small business start-ups, credit, etc.)
- Fair Housing (e.g.: homeownership, rentals, homelessness, etc.)
- Education (e.g.: access to quality early learning opportunities, educational achievement, post-secondary learning recruitment and retention, etc.)
- Workforce and Employment (e.g.: jobs, unemployment, representation, etc.)
- Public Safety (e.g.: child welfare, disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system, confinement, immigration, gangs, etc.)
- Health and Well-Being (e.g.: community health, preventable diseases, mental health, etc.)

These subcommittees assisted the Cedar Rapids Commission in identifying areas of systemic disproportionality that could serve as key progress indicators for its work.

### **State of Equity Process**

As part of its 50 Year Celebration, the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission engaged almost 100 individuals representing 60 organizations in the development of a “State of Equity in Cedar Rapids Report.” This project used Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) to take a snapshot of any disproportionality that may be found throughout systems in Cedar Rapids and Linn County. The Center for Disease Control defines CBPR as an applied collaborative approach that enables community residents to more actively participate in the full spectrum of research (from conception

→ design → conduct → analysis → interpretation → conclusions → communication of results) with a goal of influencing change in community systems, programs or policies.

Community members and researchers partnered to combine knowledge and action for change to improve community well-being and often reduce disparities. The final report is slated to be released on April 23, 2014.

### **Partnership with HUD**

In December 2013 the Commission received notice from HUD that it would receive an additional \$235,000 to expand its current Fair Housing work. This new grant will be used in 2014 to expand on current work by:

- Expanding comprehensive fair housing education and outreach to vulnerable populations such as victims of domestic violence, Latinos, immigrants, Limited English Language speakers, and children.
- Adding a bilingual (English/Spanish) Fair Housing Investigator and Conciliator to assist with the increased educational outreach and to complete fair housing investigations.
- Partner with local organizations like WayPoint, Young Parents Network, Jane Boyd, RED-I, Diversity Focus and the Catherine McAuley Center to conduct a Fair Housing Conference on April 23, 2014.
- Partner with local, state and national LGBTQ organizations to provide focused education and outreach on HUD's new Equal Access Rule.

### **Rental Business Training Program**

The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission partnered with the City of Cedar Rapids' Rental Services Training program to provide fair housing and anti-discrimination training for housing providers in our community. Through this program, CRCRC provided training to over 850 individuals including: landlords, tenant associations, advocacy groups, social service agencies, and the general public.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

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City of Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Mission Statement:

*To promote and protect equality under the law.*

The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission is an Administrative Law Agency which exists to:

- ◆ Provide education and outreach to the community on civil rights and fair housing issues;
- ◆ Receive citizen inquiries alleging discrimination;
- ◆ Determine jurisdiction under federal/state/local civil rights laws.

If inquiries are jurisdictional, to:

- ◆ Investigate the complaints;
- ◆ Conduct mediation/conciliation to resolve complaint allegations;
- ◆ Recommend findings after a complaint is investigated;
- ◆ Assist in the public hearing process.

If inquiries are not jurisdictional, to:

- ◆ Refer citizens to appropriate agencies for assistance.

## WHO WE ARE

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The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) is the Local Administrative Law Agency charged with securing all individuals within the Cities of Cedar Rapids and Marion from discrimination because of age, color, creed, disability, family status, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation in connection with employment, public accommodations, housing, credit, and education.

Civil Rights law codifies the basic rights that all people of a society are supposed to have, e.g. the right to vote or to receive fair treatment from the law. It is the “bottom” or “the line we shall not cross” when it comes to decency towards our fellow community members. The commission’s work goes beyond investigation and enforcement. It goes towards making our community a place where we all, in the fullness of our diversity, want to live.

The Commission is composed of eleven volunteer members who are appointed by the Mayor for a three-year term. Each may serve three consecutive three-year terms. This is a policy-making body, which directs the Commission staff. Commissioners are also involved in revising the local civil rights ordinance and assisting staff members in their efforts to enforce these laws. The Commission annually elects a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. Regularly scheduled public meetings take place on the third Wednesday of each month.

## WHAT WE DO

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With the understanding that investigation and compliance is the floor not the roof of our efforts, the Civil Rights Commission uses a three prong approach to its work.

The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) strategy is:

- **Civil Rights Discrimination Investigation and Enforcement:** The CRCRC, in partnership with state and federal agencies, enforces federal, state and local laws which prohibit discrimination.
- **Community Outreach and Education:** The CRCRC serves as a source of information for individuals, employers, local government, and community organizations related to anti-discrimination law and policy, the effects of discriminatory acts and practices, the well-being of underserved and underrepresented groups and communities with a protected status.
- **Strategic Identification and Partnership Efforts:** The CRCRC actively partners with local government, local employers, and community organizations in their efforts to make sure that Cedar Rapids is a place where all of its citizens can experience dignity, fairness and the fruits of building a greater community now and for the next generation.



## **LOCAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAW**

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Prohibits discrimination/different treatment in education, employment, housing, credit, and public accommodations because of:

- ◆ Age (18+)
- ◆ Association (with a protected class)
- ◆ Color
- ◆ Creed
- ◆ Familial or Marital Status
- ◆ Gender Identity
- ◆ National Origin
- ◆ Mental or Physical Disability
- ◆ Race
- ◆ Religion
- ◆ Retaliation
- ◆ Sex (gender, pregnancy, sexual harassment)
- ◆ Sexual Orientation
- ◆ Lawful Source of Income (*Marion only*)

## **ENFORCEMENT/JURISDICTION**

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The Commission enforces local civil rights laws in the areas of employment, public accommodations, housing, credit, and education when the alleged discriminatory action was because of the protected characteristic, within the city limits of Cedar Rapids and Marion. Complaints against any department of the City of Cedar Rapids or the City of Marion are investigated by the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.

The Commission does not:

- ◆ Enforce landlord/tenant laws
- ◆ Enforce labor laws, including: Wage and Hour, Family and Medical Leave Act, Workers Compensation Law
- ◆ Deal with unfair treatment in at-will employment situations if no discrimination, as defined in civil rights law, is involved
- ◆ Deal with discrimination that is not illegal (prohibited under any laws)

Although the Commission does not enforce state or federal laws, we may be able to help individuals file complaints with the appropriate agencies. We also may be able to refer complainants to the agency that can help them if their situation does not involve civil rights law.

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) in Des Moines enforces the state's civil rights laws, which are similar to our local law.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is a federal agency and enforces the following federal laws:

- ◆ Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
- ◆ Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended
- ◆ Equal Pay Act of 1963, as amended
- ◆ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Titles 1 and 5)
- ◆ Pregnancy Discrimination Act (amendment to Title 7)
- ◆ Civil Rights Act of 1991
- ◆ Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Sections 501 and 505)
- ◆ Executive Order 12067

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), also a federal agency, enforces the following federal laws:

- ◆ Title 8 of the Civil Rights Act of 1968
- ◆ Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces the following federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education:

- ◆ Discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin is prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ◆ Sex discrimination is prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- ◆ Discrimination on the basis of disability is prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- ◆ Age discrimination is prohibited by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975

These civil rights laws enforced by OCR extend to all state education agencies, elementary and secondary school systems, colleges and universities, vocational schools, proprietary schools, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, libraries, and museums that receive U.S. Department of Education funds. Areas covered may include, but are not limited to: admissions, recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student treatment and services, counseling and guidance, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, vocational education, recreation, physical education, athletics, housing, and employment. OCR also has responsibilities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (prohibiting disability discrimination by public entities, whether or not they receive federal financial assistance). In addition, as of January 8, 2002, OCR enforces the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (Section 9525 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). Under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, no public elementary school or State or local education agency that provides an opportunity for one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society.

## **DEFINITIONS**

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**Age** – persons age 18 and over: protected under the local ordinance. Persons under the age of 18: a parent or custodial adult may file a civil rights complaint on behalf of a child under the age of 18. For Housing, under age 18 is protected under familial status.

**Association** – a person’s relationship or association with a person protected under Chapter 69 in Cedar Rapids or Chapter 31 in Marion.

**Color** – skin pigmentation

**Creed** – a formal summary of beliefs; a set of beliefs or principles not necessarily religious

**Disability** – physical and/or mental impairment, which substantially limits a major life activity; others’ perception of having such impairment; history or record of having such impairment

**Familial Status** – the presence of children; protects one or more individuals under age 18:

- ◆ who is domiciled with a parent or another person who has legal custody;
- ◆ and the designee of the parent or other person who has legal custody;
- ◆ and a person who is pregnant or in the process of securing legal custody of someone under age 18

**Gender Identity** – the gender role that a person claims – which may or may not align with his or her physical gender

**Lawful Source of Income (Marion only)** – any lawful, verifiable source of money paid directly or indirectly to or on behalf of a renter or buyer of housing, including income derived from:

- A. Any lawful profession or occupation.
- B. Any government or private assistance, subsidy, voucher, grant, or loan program.
- C. Any gift, inheritance, pension, annuity, alimony, child support, or other consideration of benefit.
- D. Any sale or pledge of property or interest in property.

**Marital Status** – whether a person is married or not

**National Origin** – includes people who have a common origin, tradition and language, and who are capable of forming or actually constitute a Nation-State

**Race** – a division of humankind possessing traits that are transmissible by descent and sufficient to characterize the division as a distinct human type

**Religion** – a belief in the existence of a superhuman controlling power, especially of God or gods, usually expressed in worship or a system of faith and worship

**Retaliation** – to take action against another person because such person has lawfully opposed any practice forbidden under Chapter 69 or Chapter 31, obeys the provisions of Chapter 69 or Chapter 31, or has filed a complaint, testified, or assisted in any proceeding under Chapter 69 or Chapter 31

**Sex** – gender is either male or female, belonging to one of two main groups (male or female) which is dependent on reproductive functions; includes sexual harassment and pregnancy

**Sexual Orientation** – actual, history of, or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality; does not include participation in acts which are prohibited by law

## **COMMISSION HISTORY**

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In 1963, local minorities placed pressure on the Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Robert M. L. Johnson, to establish a local civil rights commission. The local Council of Churches, along with the Jewish community and the Roman Catholic Clergy, supported the minority groups' call for the establishment of a commission. On October 17, 1963, Mayor Johnson and the City Council adopted Resolution No. 1436, creating the Mayor's Committee on Human Rights. Mayor Johnson then appointed citizen members to the Committee.

The first task was to determine how to run a Human Rights Committee. At the time, cities and states were just beginning to create such agencies. The newness of the enterprise meant no standard existed to be a guide. The Committee's primary goals included education, prevention and mediation. The Committee strove to be both effective and efficient as it took on these challenges.

In addition to tackling the administrative issues associated with a new organization, the Committee also had to struggle through the development of civil rights laws. In its early years, many of the civil rights that we take for granted were nonexistent. In 1963, there were few civil rights laws, and even

fewer examples of civil rights law cases, especially in the state of Iowa. At that time, Congress and state legislatures were enacting some of the earliest civil rights legislation, including the Iowa Fair Employment Practices Act and the national Equal Pay for Equal Work Act. For these first few years, a comprehensive Iowa Civil Rights Act was not in place. These deficiencies left important legal questions unanswered, complicating the early years of the Committee.

Initially, only housing cases were filed. The Committee tried to be proactive in dealing with race-based housing discrimination by contacting a number of area landlords and asking them to agree to not discriminate based on race when renting. The Committee created a document for landlords to sign stating that they would rent to minority individuals. The goal was to get half of Cedar Rapids' landlords to sign the statement. They hired a retired high school principal to make personal calls to apartment owners who had not signed the letter of intent. Those signatures represented 598 rental units out of 1,559. The Committee asked owners who had not signed a letter of intent to reconsider their decision. The Committee then compiled a list of the landlords, homebuilders, real estate personnel and employers who had positive dealings with minority individuals as tenants.

In addition to reaching out to area landlords, the Committee also sought out members of Cedar Rapids' minority communities. This was a particularly important task for the Committee because in the early years, whites would often report incidents on behalf of blacks. In order to combat this problem, the Committee surveyed the black community, as well as conducted a census, to get a better understanding of the problems facing the Cedar Rapids minority communities.

The Committee focused much of its energy on raising general community awareness about discrimination and about the Committee itself. Members attended conferences and requested public service time on local radio and television stations. They also made special efforts to address the needs of Cedar Rapids' youth.

In these early years, some people raised concerns about the effectiveness of a commission with no enforcement powers. There was a growing consensus in the community that in order for the Committee to be effective, it needed enforcement powers. Concerned groups and members of the minority communities petitioned Mayor Johnson and the City Council for an ordinance that would make the Committee a more effective body.

In October 1969, the City Council passed City Ordinance 104-69 renaming the Committee "Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission," giving the Commission enforcement powers and empowering the commission to hire an executive secretary, and other staff as the Commission deemed necessary.

Much has changed since 1963. The Commission is now empowered to investigate complaints in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodation, education and credit on the bases of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, physical and mental disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, familial status, and marital status.

In July 1997, the Commission started receiving information and hearing from individuals in the community about the need to add sexual orientation as a protected class. The process of updating the ordinance included discussion, research, and input from the community. It took approximately 16 months to complete, and with a 3-2 vote in November 1998, the City Council added sexual orientation (for definition see page 8) to the local civil rights ordinance that became effective in January 1999.

In collaboration with the University of Iowa, College of Law, the Commission began updating its ordinance in 2009. After two and a half years of public input, all changes except lawful source of income were adopted and the new ordinance was signed by the Mayor of Cedar Rapids on January 10, 2012.

## **COMMISSIONERS**

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In 2013, two Commissioners ended their tenure with the Commission – Ann Pham on June 30 and Bret Nilles on July 31. One new Commissioner was appointed to serve a three-year term – Emily Bowman, two new Commissioners were appointed to fill one year vacancies – Rev. Tom Capo and Dr. Ruth White, and two commissioners were reappointed – Barbara Gay and Robin Tucker. Below are bios for Commissioners who served some or all of 2013.



**Emily Bowman**

**Currently Serving, since November 2013**

Dr. Emily Bowman is the newest member of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission. She is currently employed as an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Coe College, where she specializes in inequality, sociological theory, and educational policy. She obtained her B.A. from Hanover College and her M.A. and Ph.D. from Indiana University. Prior to moving to Cedar Rapids, Dr. Bowman lived in Bloomington, Indiana, where she served as a member and the Chair of the Bloomington Human Rights Commission. As a member of the CRCRC, she looks forward to continuing her efforts in not only educating people about their rights and responsibilities regarding the civil rights ordinance, but also ameliorating discrimination and fighting for social equality here in Cedar Rapids.



**Reverend Tom Capo**

**Currently Serving, since September 2013**

Tom Capo is the minister of Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist. He is Vice President of the Inter-Religious Council of Linn County, is on the Program Committee for Prairiewood Franciscan Retreat Center, is a moderator for KCRG's Ethical Perspectives on the News, is a member of the Downtown Rotary, serves on the Linn County Homeless Coordinating Board, and the Linn County Community Resources Committee. In addition, Tom has worked with the Cedar Rapids' Blue Zones Purpose and Engagement team and the Sexual Health Alliance of Linn and Johnson County. Tom lives in Cedar Rapids with his wife, Martha, and his youngest son, Jacob. Tom's oldest son, Aaron, also lives in Cedar Rapids.



**Tamara Cronin**

**Currently Serving, since July 2012**

Tammy is currently an Employment Developer for Systems Unlimited, Inc. She has held various other positions within local colleges as Student Advisor and Workforce Career Consultant. She is active in the community as a member of the Employer's Council of Iowa for Region 10, and is serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer with the Community Corrections Improvement Association. Tammy and her family are volunteers with the MacBride Raptor Project, a cooperative effort between The University of Iowa and Kirkwood Community College, since 1997.

A Cedar Rapids native, Tammy brought her family back to Cedar Rapids from Tampa, Florida in 1994 after having lived there for 6 years. She graduated with honors from the University of Iowa in

1998 with a degree in Religion and has completed work towards Master's degrees in Special Education and Library Science. Tammy is married to Phil Cronin, Store Manager of the Vernon Village True Value on Mt. Vernon Road in Cedar Rapids. They have three grown children: two married and one attending the University of Iowa. They are proud grandparents to one granddaughter; Zoe Cronin and a Great Dane grand-puppy named Mary Lou.



**Leland Freie**

**Currently Serving, since July 2011**

Leland has been the Day Manager of Foundation 2 Youth Shelter for over 20 years. He received his MA in Therapeutic Recreation from the University of Iowa. Leland is married and has a son and 4 grandchildren.



**Barbara Gay**

**Currently Serving, since July 2010**

Barb Gay is the Executive Director for Foundation 2, Inc., a non-profit agency providing crisis support to individuals, families, and communities. Barb received her Master's Degree in Health Education from the University of Northern Iowa, and has been working in the field of community health with non-profits in Cedar Rapids since 1993. Barb is a 1998 graduate of the Leadership for Five Seasons program. Barb and her husband, Scott, have two children.



**Paulette Hall**

**Currently Serving, since July 2012**

Paulette grew up on a ranch in Idaho and attended college at Brigham Young University and the University of Minnesota. She received her BS degree in Horticulture and spent 20 months as a volunteer in Japan. Paulette did freelance writing and teaching at vocational/tech schools before moving to Cedar Rapids in March of 1979. She raised 5 children, was a foster parent, and hosted foreign students for four years. Paulette volunteered at schools and taught reading to adults. She has served as a volunteer to women's groups, children and teens and held various Boy Scouts of America positions. After being a stay-at-home mom for many years, Paulette accepted the position of Business Manager for Bright Ideas! Inc. and has been there since 1997. She is interested in every aspect of civil rights and wanted to give something back to the community.



**Salma Igram**

**Currently Serving, since July 2011**

For the past 10 years Salma Igram has been working as the CFO at Cedar Graphics Inc., a printing company located in Hiawatha, Iowa. Salma received her Accounting and Management degrees from Mt. Mercy University. Her passion is the nonprofit world as she has served (and is still serving) for many years on different boards. Being accepted and accepting of others, as all humans were created equal, is what Salma, her husband, four children and ten grandchildren try to live by.



**Bret Nilles**

**Served July 2011 – July 2013**

Bret Nilles is currently a Finance Process Manager for Rockwell Collins, Inc. and has held various other positions throughout the finance and accounting organizations there. Bret has been active in the community as the current Treasurer on the Board of Directors for the Neighborhood Transportation Service (NTS), on the board for the New Bohemia Group, and is the First Vice Chair of the Linn County Democrats. He also is the

race director for the New Bo Fest Half Marathon and an active board member of the Cedar Valley Running Association. In addition, he served on the Steering Committee for the Neighborhood Planning Process, which created a strategic plan and vision for the post flood recovery efforts in Cedar Rapids.

Bret has performed other volunteer work in the local schools with tutoring, Junior Achievement and elementary school Pen-Pal programs organized at Rockwell.

Originally from Dubuque, Iowa, Bret has lived in Cedar Rapids for 28 years after graduating from the University of Iowa with degrees in accounting and economics. He also earned an MBA from St. Ambrose University. Bret is married to Suzanne Nilles, also employed at Rockwell Collins. They have five grown daughters with two currently in college.



**Laura O'Leary**  
**Currently Serving, since August 2008**

Laura O'Leary is currently the manager of Pheasant Run Apartments, a 231 unit apartment complex in southwest Cedar Rapids. She has been managing residential rental property in Cedar Rapids for about 27 years. Laura has been active in Landlords of Linn County since 1988, and is currently the President.

She has served on the Board of Directors of Landlords of Iowa since 1991, which has been instrumental in successfully promoting numerous legislative changes to the Landlord Tenant Code of Iowa, benefiting many property owners statewide. Laura has served on the Cedar Rapids Affordable Housing Commission, The Enhance Our Neighborhoods Task Force, and has served two terms on the Cedar Rapids Housing Board of Appeals, of which she is a past chair. In addition, she is an active parishioner and volunteer of St. Jude Church, and has been a volunteer crisis pregnancy counselor for Birthright.

Originally from Manchester, Iowa, Laura attended Wartburg College in Waverly as a foreign language major. In Manchester she was a community volunteer and homemaker before moving to Cedar Rapids in 1984. She is married to Joe O'Leary, an IT Data Analyst for Ad Track. They have three grown sons and two grandchildren.



**Anne Pham**  
**Served January 2012 – June 2013**

Anne Pham was sponsored from Vietnam, where the generosity of Iowans provided a sense of belonging and optimism for opportunity; Iowa has now been home for over 25 years. Following college, she settled in Cedar Rapids, where she has lived for the past 7 years. Anne is a graduate of the University of Iowa, with a Masters' Degree in Business Administration, an undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering, and a minor in Mathematics. She manages the drinking water compliance and operations section of the Water Quality Bureau for the Department of Natural Resources.

Passionate about equality, Anne volunteers much of her time to causes that support underrepresented populations. In addition to serving on the Civil Rights Commission, she is a Big Sister for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Sponsorship Coordinator for Emerging Opportunities for Sustainability, tech college adjunct instructor, and a board member for Prevent Child Abuse Iowa.



**Keith Rippey**  
**Currently Serving, since November 2010**

Mr. Rippey is currently the Executive Director for Area Ambulance Service. He has held this position since August of 2005. Since coming to Cedar Rapids, Keith has become an active member of the community participating in a variety of organizations including the Chamber Ambassadors, Downtown Rotary, Neighborhood Transportation Service, Miracles In Motion, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, Linn County Gaming Committee, Family Promise board of directors, and Community Corrections Improvement Association board of directors. Mr. Rippey has been in either the ambulance or passenger transportation business for approximately 10 years.

Prior to entering this field Mr. Rippey had a twenty year career in law enforcement. He retired from the Peoria, Illinois police department as its Chief in 1994. Soon after retiring, Mr. Rippey accepted a contract with the Department of Justice and went to the country of Haiti to work with an international team of law enforcement executives charged with the task of establishing Haiti's (first ever) civilian police force.

Mr. Rippey holds a Masters' degree in Management from the University of Northern Colorado and a Bachelors' degree from the University of Denver. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Police Academy.

Keith is married to Susie (a school teacher) and has one son, Jordan.



**Robin Tucker**  
**Currently Serving, since January 2012**

Robin Tucker is a native of Cedar Rapids and is currently a REALTOR® with Tommy Tucker Realty Co. and general manager of Tucker Manufacturing Co., Inc., two multi-generational companies. Prior to returning to Cedar Rapids 25 years ago, he worked in public accounting in Omaha. Robin has participated in trade exhibitions in England, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States.

Robin has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, Accounting from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. He completed "*A Leader's Guide to Asian Cultures*" in St. Louis in the Executive Education for the Global Leader program through FedEx and the University of Memphis.

Robin is a Rotarian and has performed other volunteer work throughout the years with various schools, the YMCA, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, the Jaycees, community and industry organizations, and the City of Cedar Rapids.

Robin and his wife Carole have three daughters, two in school and one college graduate.



**Dr. Ruth White**  
**Served July 2009 – June 2012; Currently Serving, since February 2013**

After more than thirty years of teaching in the Cedar Rapids schools, Dr. Ruth White retired from Washington High School, where she taught AP English and Humanities. White also served as Academic Advisor to Minority Students, through which she counseled minority students toward greater academic success. In that capacity, Dr. White developed The Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success, a summer program for African American high school students and TAP (Toward Advanced Placement), a curricular choice for minority students

which encourages students with untapped potential toward enrollment in AP classes. She was also instrumental in developing Washington High School's Ethnic Week celebration, a program that involves the entire student body and celebrates the school's rich diversity.

In 2002, she accepted an invitation from Governor Vilsack to head the Commission on the Status of African Americans, a division of the Iowa Department of Human Rights. After six months in that position, Dr. White was promoted to head the department and accepted a State leadership position. In this position she was able to learn and implement the concept of Cultural Competence training, which enables public and private enterprises to include and retain people from various cultural backgrounds as valuable components in the corporate structure. When she returned to the community, Dr. White became involved in Cultural Competence training as an independent consultant and in the issue of domestic violence in the African American community through the Iowa Accountability Program.

She is founder and Executive Director of The Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success and The Academy Expansion, and serves on the boards of Diversity Focus, I'll Make Me a World in Iowa, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, LBA Foundation, and Red-I.

Currently, Dr. White works with Transwebglobal, where she helps prepare students overseas to improve their performance on SAT exams.

Dr. White and her husband, George Pope are the adoptive parents of their grandson, Travell.

## **COMMISSION STAFF**

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### **John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, Executive Director Hired September 2013**

John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas, MSW, an immigrant from Guatemala, has been recognized at the local, state and national level for his work in the area of diversity, human and civil rights. He was the former State Director of Equity and Civil Rights at the Washington State Department of Education (OSPI). Other appointments include: Public Policy Lead at the Northwest Area Foundation where he oversaw an eight-state multimillion-dollar portfolio designed to promote equity, build assets, reduce poverty and improve the lives of families and communities of color; Director of the Iowa Division of Latino Affairs; National Training and Technical Assistance Director at the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice; Executive Director of the Institute for the Support of Latino/a Families and Communities; and a co-founder of the Disproportionate Minority Confinement/contact Resource Center at the University of Iowa. John-Paul has taught graduate courses in areas such as Discrimination, Diversity and Oppression, Latino Immigration to the United States, multicultural education and family/community development. He has a B.A. in Sociology/International Relations/Multiculturalism from Saint Mary University, a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Iowa, and completed his course work towards a doctorate in cultural competence education and training at the same institution. As a young adult, John-Paul worked in meatpacking in Kansas to put himself through school, and it was there he began his work in the United States as an advocate, community organizer and educator.

### **Darryl Lipscomb, Compliance Manager Employed 1989 – 2013**

Mr. Lipscomb was a Compliance Manager with the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission. He has over twenty years of experience in employment, fair housing law, ADA, and mediation. He is

credentialed as a Qualified Mediator, a Professional Human Rights Worker and graduate of the National Fair Housing Training Academy in Washington, DC. He is a member of the Iowa Olmstead Consumer Task Force, former member of the Board of Directors of the Iowa American Civil Liberties Union, a former State Commissioner – Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans, a life member of the NAACP and a life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. He serves as Adjunct Faculty/Counselor in the Student Development Office at Kirkwood Community College and is a member of the Kirkwood EEO/Affirmative Action Advisory Board. He earned his B.S. and M.S. Ed., from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse.

**Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson, Senior Investigator**  
**Hired November 2008**

Stefanie is a native of Kansas City, Missouri and upon moving to Cedar Rapids in 2000 became active in the community. She helped found and serves as the Board President of Family Promise of Linn County, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving families with children who are homeless; she serves as a board member of Diversity Focus and Waypoint, was appointed by the Governor to serve on the State of Iowa Council on Homelessness. She is a consultant to the City of Cedar Rapids/Linn County ADA Advisory Committee, a member of the Iowa ADA Coalition, on the College Community School District School Improvement Advisory Board, and is a Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Volunteer Advocate with Waypoint.

Stefanie is a former coach for elementary girls in softball and high school girls in basketball. One of her most rewarding positions before joining the Civil Rights Commission was working with children and adolescents in a psychiatric hospital.

She earned the Corridor Business Journal's "Woman of Influence" Award in 2013, the "Forty Under 40" Award in 2011, and was profiled in the Fall of 2012 Diversity Focus publication of "Inclusive Communities." Stefanie received her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Missouri Western State University and will complete her Masters of Business Administration at Mount Mercy University in 2014.

Stefanie has two daughters, Ali, a college freshman who also serves in the National Guard and Julia, a second grader, who loves to dance.

**Janet A. H. Abejo, Investigator**  
**Hired January 2011**

Janet has worked at the Civil Rights Commission since January 31, 2011. Before being hired by the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, Janet worked in Human Resources for the City of Cedar Rapids. She acquired a B.S. degree in Psychology at the University of Iowa as well as an M.A. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at Roosevelt University. Janet is originally from the Chicago area, where most of her family resides. She has lived in Cedar Rapids for four years. Janet previously volunteered as an ESL tutor for adults at the Catherine McAuley Center and serves as Chair for the Board of Directors of Monsoon, United Asian Women of Iowa. She currently serves as a board member for the Arc of East Central Iowa, is a volunteer advocate for Waypoint Services, and a member of the League of Women Voters. When time permits, she is also a foster mom and volunteer for the Cedar Rapids animal shelter.

**Jeanette Gordon, Administrative Assistant**  
**Hired April 2012**

Jeanette worked in Academic Affairs at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, where she was Assistant Registrar for 15 years. Her previous work experience includes a year at Tanager Place and

over 20 years as a typesetter. Jeanette is originally from Indiana, and moved to Iowa from Denver, Colorado to be closer to her family. While in Colorado, she served as the local PTA president for four years, produced the newsletter and was the Health and Safety Committee Director for Colorado State PTA, and was an active member of the National PTA. Jeanette has two adult children, Iris and Jim, and enjoys baking bread, fishing, reading, and being outdoors.

### **Monica Challenger, Outreach and Education Coordinator**

#### **Hired March 2013**

Prior to coming to the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, Mrs. Challenger served as the Managing Director at Diversity Focus. At Rockwell Collins, she provided technical expertise as a Semiconductor Application Engineer. Previously, she was a Logistic Planning Manager at Anheuser Busch Companies. Mrs. Challenger has served as a board member for the Cedar Rapids Science Station, Technical Corridor Business Association, Kirkwood Community College Engineering Technology Academy, and Rockwell Collins Engineer Week Planning Committee. She was also selected as a member of the City of Cedar Rapids Charter Review Commission. Currently, she serves on the St. Luke's Women's & Children's Center Patient/Family Advisory Council, and both Xavier High School's and St. Matthew School's School Improvement Advisory Committees. For over 10 years, she has been associated with the Open Minds Open Doors Math, Science, and Technology Conference for Young Girls as a workshop developer, presenter and planning committee member. She also judges robotic competitions for the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Technical Challenge competitions. Mrs. Challenger lives in Cedar Rapids with her husband and four children.

### **Zadok Nampala**

#### **Intern, November 2013-May 2014**

Zadok is completing his practicum in pursuit of his Masters in Social Work degree at the University of Iowa. He and his wife of seven years moved to Iowa City so she could go to medical school and he could attend graduate school at the University of Iowa. Zadok has a passion for language and language rights, and is an advocate for people with limited English proficiency in Iowa City and the surrounding areas. He has been a professional interpreter/translator for over 15 years, and is a Council Member in University Heights. Zadok would have loved to live and work here in Cedar Rapids but an opportunity opened up in Iowa Falls and he will be moving his family there after graduation. He and his wife have a son and two daughters.

## **2013 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

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In the second half of 2013 the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission increased its focus on outreach and education programs. In 2013 the Civil Rights Commission spent an average of 15 days per month providing some type of community outreach, training or technical support. This type of outreach serves to identify issues in the community, prevent issues from rising to the level of legal discrimination and make the community a more inclusive and welcoming place. Through this program, it has reached over 2,367 people, including 327 children in 2013 alone. Examples include:

- January 3, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- January 4, 2013: KCRG news, Homelessness and Family Promise of Linn County, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- January 4, 2013: Diversity Focus Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- January 6, 2013: Monsoon Executive Committee Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended

- January 6, 2013: KCRG “To the Point” show, Homelessness and Family Promise of Linn County, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- January 9, 2013: Dignity and Fairness Training for City employees, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- January 10, 2013: Leadership for 5 Seasons, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- January 15, 2013: Dignity and Fairness Training for City employees, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- January 16, 2013: City of Cedar Rapids/Linn County ADA Advisory Committee, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- January 17, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness Board, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- January 22-25, 2013: Prairie Elementary, Fair Housing presentation to 1st graders, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- February 1, 2013: Leadership for 5 Seasons, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- February 6, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- February 6, 2013: Mt. Mercy University, class presentation, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- February 6, 2013: Anti-Harassment training, new city employees, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- February 7, 2013: Linn County Continuum of Care Policy and Planning Committee, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- February 25, 2013: Leadership for 5 Seasons, Communications Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- February 27, 2013: Employment Law Class, Mt. Mercy University, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- March 1, 2013: Diversity Focus Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- March 6, 2013: Anti-Harassment training, new city employees, Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- March 7, 2013: Civil Rights presentation to City of Cedar Rapids/Linn County ADA Advisory Committee, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- March 7, 2013: Corridor Business Journal, Women of Influence, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- March 15, 2013: Leadership for 5 Seasons, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- March 18, 2013: Resource Development Committee Meeting, The Arc Board of Directors, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- March 20, 2013: 27th Annual Symposium on Civil and Human Rights, Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- March 25, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- March 25, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Board meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 4, 2013: City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County ADA Commission meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 4-5, 2013: Engaging Community Narrating Change Conference, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 5, 2013: Waypoint Volunteer Appreciation, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 5-6, 2013: 16th Annual Arc March, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 7, 2013: Monsoon (United Asian Women of Iowa) Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended

- April 11, 2013: Mirage Properties, Fair Housing Outreach, Janet A. H. Abejo and Monica A. Challenger presented
- April 12, 2013: Leadership for 5 Day, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 15, 2013: Waypoint Volunteer Advocate Training, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 12, 2013: Olmstead Task Force orientation meeting, Darryl Lipscomb attended
- April 17, 2013: Conducted simulation interviews for Prairie High School students for their class, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson
- April 18, 2013: ADA Conference in Davenport, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 19, 2013: Linn-Mar Diversity Fair, Monica A. Challenger and Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 22, 2013: Arc Resource Development Committee Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 22, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- April 23, 2013: League of Human & Civil Rights, Janet A. H. Abejo, Karl Cassell, and Darryl Lipscomb attended via conference call
- April 23-24, 2013: Iowa Women's Leadership Conference, Coralville, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 25, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Board meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- April 26, 2013: Peer Action Disability Support (PADS) meeting, Darryl Lipscomb attended
- May 2, 2013: City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County ADA Commission meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 3, 2013: Leadership for Five Seasons final project and graduation, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 6-10, 2013: NFHTA (National Fair Housing Training Academy) Week 3 Training, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- May 8, 2013: Anti-Harassment training, New Hire Orientation, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- May 9, 2013: Presentation of ADA Advisory Board Work plan to City Council, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- May 10, 2013: Olmstead Task Force meeting, Darryl Lipscomb attended
- May 10, 2013: Presentation to Mt. Mercy Principles of Management class, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- May 13, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness Public Awareness Committee Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 17, 2013: Iowa Council on Homeless Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 20, 2013: Linn County Planning and Policy Continuum of Care Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 22, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Janet A. H. Abejo, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Monica A. Challenger presented
- May 23, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- May 24, 2013: Fair Housing Presentation (Donna the Dolphin) at Jackson Elementary, Janet A. H. Abejo, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Monica A. Challenger presented
- June 1, 2013: A Night at the COPA at Theatre Cedar Rapids, Janet A. H. Abejo performed (all net proceeds from this event were donated to Waypoint Services)
- June 3, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended

- June 6, 2013: Leadership for Five Seasons Day Chair Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- June 7, 2013: Diversity Focus Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- June 9, 2013: PetSmart Adoption Days for Cedar Rapids Animal Care & Control, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- June 11, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Janet A. H. Abejo, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Monica A. Challenger presented
- June 13, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- June 17, 2013: Sexual Assault Response Team Conference, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- June 18, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Monica A. Challenger presented
- June 19, 2013: Civil Rights Presentation to the Latino Advisory Group of Diversity Focus, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- June 25, 2013: Waypoint Board Orientation meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- June 27, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Board meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- July 2, 2013: Mediation, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- July 3, 2013: Strategic Planning meeting for Family Promise of Linn County, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- July 8-9, 2013: ADA training for local agency (8 hours total), Janet A. H. Abejo & Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- July 13, 2013: Arc Night at the Kernels/ADA Celebration, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- July 15, 2013: Arc Resource Development Committee Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- July 16-17, 2013: ADA Training for local agency, (8 hours total), Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- July 27, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Cedar Rapids, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- July 29, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- July 30, 2013: Fair Housing training, Marion, Monica A. Challenger presented
- July 30, 2013: Waypoint Board meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- August 1, 2013: Civil Rights educational outreach at Hispanic Mom's Group at YPN, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- August 7, 2013: Anti-Bullying educational Outreach at Kids Kampus Daycare, Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- August 7, 2013: Conciliation, Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- August 13, 2013: City Values (Diversity) Training Committee, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- August 13, 2013: Fair Housing training, Marion, Monica A. Challenger presented
- August 13, 2013: Preventing Harassment Training provided to Clipper Windpower, Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- August 19, 2013: Iowa Women's Leadership Conference Steering Committee meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- August 19, 2013: Arc Resource Development Committee Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended

- August 19-23, 2013: NFHTA (National Fair Housing Training Academy) Week 1 Training, Jeanette Gordon attended
- August 22, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County, Board of Directors Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- August 24, 2013: Event to commemorate 50 Year Anniversary of MLK's March on Washington DC, Monica A. Challenger and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- August 27, 2013: Waypoint, Board of Directors Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 5, 2013: ADA Advisory Committee Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 9, 2013: Stand Down Resource Fair, Monica A. Challenger attended
- September 9, 2013: Diversity Focus, Board of Directors Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 11, 2013: New Hire Orientation, Anti-Harassment Training, Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- September 14, 2013: Monsoon, United Asian Women of Iowa, Board of Directors Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- September 16, 2013: The Arc, Board of Directors, Resource Development Committee Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- September 16, 2013: Educational Outreach, Catherine McAuley Staff Members, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- September 17, 2013: St Paul's Focus Preschool, Donna Fair Housing Outreach, Janet A. H. Abejo and Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- September 25, 2013: Cedar Rapids Community School District Learning Support Resource Fair, Monica A. Challenger attended
- September 27, 2013: The 15th Annual Strengthening and Valuing the Latino/a Communities in Iowa, Monica A. Challenger and John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- September 19, 2013: Keynote - National Association of Youth and Family Judges, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- September 20, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 20, 2013: Waypoint Operations Committee Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 23, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, September 23, 2013, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- September 24, 2013: Waypoint Board of Directors Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 24, 2013: Conducted Anti-Harassment training to local employer, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- September 24, 2013: "BigWig Luncheon" Speaker, Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- September 27, 2013: Iowa Association of Mediators Fall Conference, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- September 30, 2013: Fair Housing Presentation, Linn County Continuum of Care, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- October 2, 2013: New City Employee, Anti-Harassment Training, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented

- October 3, 2013: Employment Law training for local employer, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- October 4, 2013: Diversity Focus Board of Directors Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- October 4, 2013: Public Awareness Subcommittee of Iowa Council on Homelessness Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- October 10, 2013: Justice and Disproportionality Summit, Monica A. Challenger and John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 10, 2013: Sixth Judicial District Department of Correctional Services Cultural Competency Committee, Monica A. Challenger attended
- October 14, 2013: St. Luke's Family Patient Family Advisory Council, Monica A. Challenger attended
- October 15, 2013: Booth, Cedar Rapids Public Library, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 17, 2013: ERGC Diversity Forum, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 18, 2013: America Reads at Prairie Ridge, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- October 21, 2013: Fair Housing Training (SAFE-CR), Monica A. Challenger presented
- October 25, 2013: Rockwell Collins Hispanic Engineers, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 28, 2013: Latino Parents Group, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 28, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- October 29, 2013: Waypoint Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- October 30, 2013: Cedar Rapids Gazette Editorial Board and Staff, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 30, 2013: Keynote, Cornell Collage (the Civil Rights of Immigrants), John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- October 31, 2013: Family Promise of Linn County Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- October 31, 2013: Immigrant Rights Network, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 31, 2013: Asian American/Pacific Islander Association, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- October 31, 2013: Human Rights Association, 2013, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 1, 2013: Iowa Civil Rights Symposium, Janet A. H. Abejo, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- November 2, 2013: Keynote, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- November 4, 2013: Governor's Anti-Bullying Summit, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- November 5, 2013: Technical Assistance, The Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- November 6, 2013: City of Cedar Rapids, Anti-Harassment Training, Janet A. H. Abejo presented
- November 7, 2013: Presentation of ADA to the City and County ADA Advisory Committee, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- November 8, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- November 8, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Monica A. Challenger presented

- November 8, 2013: Committee on Housing Equity in Cedar Rapids Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- November 13, 2013: City of Cedar Rapids Economic Development Group, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 13, 2013: Presentation of ADA Compliance at ADA Conference, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- November 15, 2013: Technical Assistance Fair Housing, Local HOA, Janet A. H. Abejo, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- November 20, 2013: U.S. Department of Justice, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 21, 2013: EEOC (US Dept.), John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 21, 2013: Iowa Immigrant Rights Network, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 21, 2013: Cedar Rapids Rotary, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 24, 2013: Arc Board Meeting, Janet A. H. Abejo attended
- November 26, 2013: Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- November 26, 2013: Ethical Perspectives (KCRG TV 9), John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- December 2, 2013: Rental Business Training, Monica A. Challenger presented
- December 3, 2013: Diversity Focus, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 3, 2013: Waypoint Board meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- December 4, 2013: Provided Anti-Harassment training to new City hires, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson presented
- December 5, 2013: Leadership Circle (DMC), John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 5, 2013: Iowa Council on Homelessness, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- December 10, 2013: Corrections Legislative Meeting, Monica A. Challenger attended
- December 11, 2013: City Police and Fire, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 12, 2013: Cedar Rapids School District, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 12, 2013: Horizons, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 12, 2013: Red-I, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 16, 2013: Nelson Mandela Memorial, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas presented
- December 17, 2013: Beyond Cultural Competence Training, John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas attended
- December 17, 2013: Diversity Training (for City), Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Jeanette Gordon attended
- December 18, 2013: Donna the Dolphin/Fair Housing Training/Anti-Bullying Cedar Valley Montessori School, Monica A. Challenger presented
- December 19, 2013: Waypoint Board Meeting, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson attended
- December 20, 2013: Fair Housing Training, Skogman Realty, Monica A. Challenger presented
- December 30, 2013: Kirkwood Truck Driving School, Civil Rights/EEO/ADA/Anti-Harassment, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Janet A. H. Abejo presented

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OF STAFF MEMBERS**

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### **John-Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas, Executive Director**

- ◆ Member of the Leadership for Five Seasons class of 2014
- ◆ Leadership Circle, Casey Families Foundation
- ◆ Executive Leadership Program, Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
- ◆ State Latino Summit, University of Iowa

### **Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson, Interim Senior Investigator, Mediator**

- ◆ Board Member, Diversity Focus
- ◆ Board Member, Waypoint Services
- ◆ Board Member, Iowa Council on Homelessness
- ◆ Board Member, College Community School Improvement Advisory Board
- ◆ Board President, Family Promise (2008-2013)
- ◆ Volunteer, Domestic Violence Advocate, Waypoint Services
- ◆ Member, Leadership for 5 Seasons class of 2013
- ◆ Advisor to the City of Cedar Rapids/Linn County ADA Advisory Committee
- ◆ Member of the Linn County Continuum of Care Planning & Policy Council
- ◆ Member of the State of Iowa ADA Coalition
- ◆ Member, National Association of Human Rights Workers
- ◆ Member, International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies

### **Janet A. H. Abejo, Investigator, Mediator**

- ◆ Board Member, The Arc – East Central Iowa
- ◆ Chair, Monsoon – United Asian Women of Iowa
- ◆ Member, Linn County League of Women Voters
- ◆ Volunteer, City of Cedar Rapids Animal Care and Control
- ◆ Volunteer Advocate, Waypoint Services

## 2013 CASELOAD REPORTS

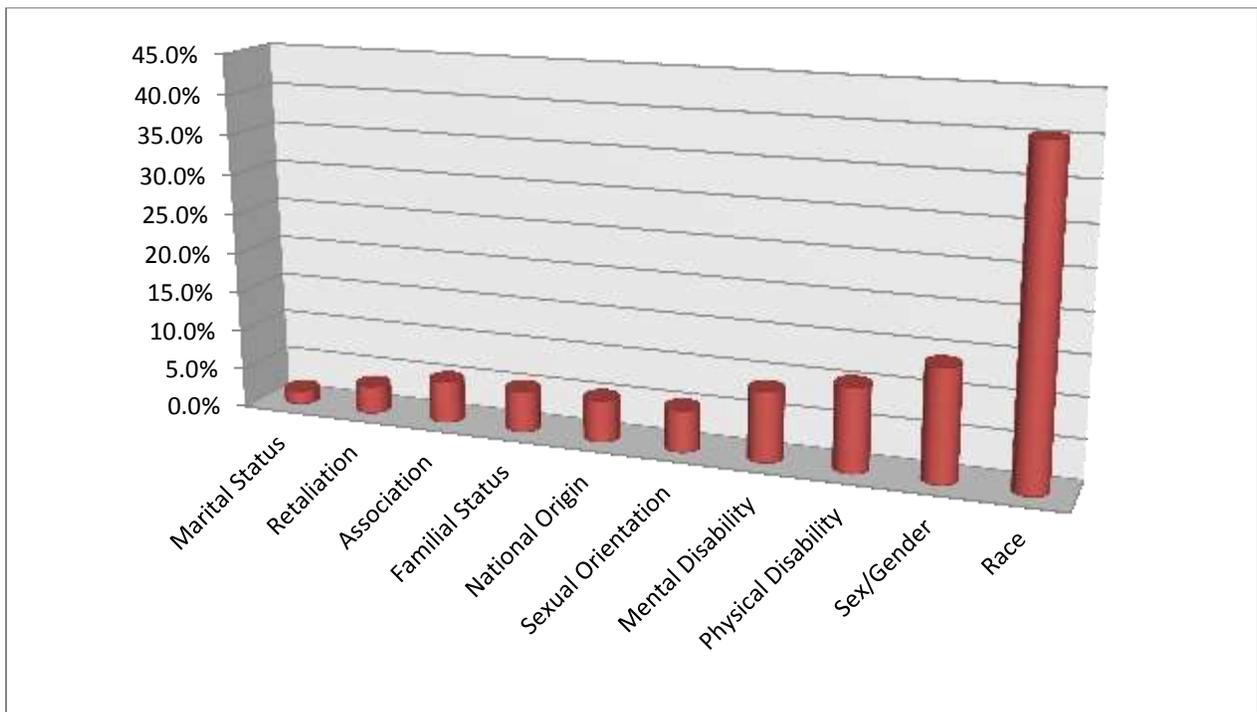
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It is a credit to the Commission's approach that many issues are resolved informally before reaching a formal "case" or "complaint" status. This is the advantage of having a local body, with local staff that know and understand the community and can address arising issues before they become litigious thus saving staff time, community conflict and money.

In 2013, 47 cases were filed with the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission. Of those 47, 29 were for employment, 11 for housing, 4 for public accommodation, 2 for education, and 1 for credit.

The chart below shows the bases for all cases filed in 2013:

**BASES FOR ALL CASES FILED IN 2013**



## CASELOAD STATISTICS

AC – Administrative Closure  
 EEOC – Equal Employment  
 Opportunity Commission  
 FTC – Failure to Cooperate

ICRC – Iowa Civil Rights  
 Commission  
 NJ – Non Jurisdictional  
 NPC – No Probable Cause

PC – Probable Cause  
 RTS – Right To Sue  
 SR – Satisfactory Resolution  
 WD – Withdrawal

CRCRC#	Date Filed	Area	Basis	Date Closed	Resolution
3296	4/1/2011	Emp	Physical Disability	6/28/2013	SR
3299	4/20/2011	Emp	Age, Sex	4/18/2013	NPC
3302	5/3/2011	Emp	Mental Disability	2/4/2013	AC/FTC
3306	6/10/2011	Emp	Physical Disability	1/22/2013	AC/FTC
3310	7/22/2011	Emp	Sex/Pregnancy	9/25/2013	SR
3317	10/13/2011	Emp	Race, Retaliation	2/15/2013	NPC
3320	11/4/2011	Emp	Race	3/22/2013	NPC
3330	3/28/2012	Emp	Sex, Mental Disability, Retaliation	10/1/2013	AC/RTS
3336	5/24/2012	Emp	Race, Color, Sex	5/13/2013	SR
3347	10/19/2012	Emp	Race	3/13/2013	AC/FTC
3348	8/1/2012	Emp	Age, Physical Disability	11/8/2013	NPC
3351	9/14/2012	Emp	Age, Retaliation	10/16/2013	NPC
3353	10/11/2012	Hsg	Race and Retaliation	4/30/2013	AC/FTC
3356	10/30/2012	Hsg	Mental Disability	2/1/2013	NPC
3359	10/30/2012	Hsg	Race and Gender	1/25/2013	SR
3360	12/6/2012	Emp	Race, gender	11/25/2013	NPC
3362	1/16/2013	Hsg	Familial Status	5/8/2013	SR
3363	12/26/2012	Edu	Retaliation	12/18/2013	AC
3364	12/26/2012	Edu	Race, Retaliation	12/18/2013	AC
3367	2/1/2013	PA	Race	10/14/2013	AC/FTC
3368	1/28/2013	Emp	Mental Disability, Association	2/25/2013	SR
3369	2/13/2013	Emp	Sex	10/11/2013	SR
3370	2/13/2013	Emp	Physical Disability	7/31/2013	NPC
3373	2/28/2013	Emp	Mental Disability	10/15/2013	NPC
3381	6/13/2013	Hsg	Age, Race, Gender, Familial Status	10/3/2013	NPC
3382	7/15/2013	Hsg	Race	9/6/2013	AC/FTC
3383	6/11/2013	Hsg	National Origin	8/6/2013	SR
3385	7/15/2013	Hsg	Race, Familial Status	10/16/2013	NPC
3387	6/28/2013	Emp	Race	7/19/2013	SR
3389	7/30/2013	Hsg	Race	11/1/2013	NPC
3394	8/20/2013	Hsg	National Origin	11/22/2013	NPC
3397	8/19/2013	Hsg	Marital Status	9/6/2013	WD
3398	8/15/2013	Hsg	Race	8/27/2013	AC/HUD
3400	9/24/2013	Hsg	Physical Disability	12/27/2013	NPC

## OVERVIEW OF THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

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There are 12 steps in the complaint process:

- |                          |                 |                  |                    |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Filing                | 4. Cross-Filing | 7. Screening     | 10. Finding        |
| 2. Jurisdictional Review | 5. Answer       | 8. Mediation     | 11. Conciliation   |
| 3. Notice                | 6. Rebuttal     | 9. Investigation | 12. Public Hearing |

*From the time the Commission receives the complaint to the time the investigation is completed and a finding has been made, the Commission is a neutral fact-finder and represents neither party.*

1. **FILING:** The Complainant (the person who alleges the discrimination) submits a complaint to the Civil Rights Commission for review.
2. **JURISDICTIONAL REVIEW:** When a signed/verified complaint is received, it is reviewed to determine whether it meets legal requirements of the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Ordinance or the Marion Civil Rights Ordinance (Chapter 69 of the Municipal Code of Cedar Rapids, or Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code of Marion). A complaint must be filed with the Commission within 300 days (365 days for housing complaints) of the last alleged discriminatory incident.
  - a. If the complaint does not meet the statutory requirements, the Complainant is notified that the Commission does not have jurisdiction and the complaint is closed. Where possible, the Complainant is referred to another agency.
  - b. If the complaint meets the statutory requirements, a charge of discrimination is drafted by the Commission and signed by the Complainant. The charge is given a Complainant number
3. **NOTICE:** A copy of the formal complaint is mailed to the Complainant. Another copy is served on the **Respondent** (the person or organization charged in the complaint with a violation of Chapter 69 of the Municipal Code of Cedar Rapids or Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code of Marion, and Iowa Code Chapter 216).
4. **CROSS-FILING:** The complaints (except housing cases) are automatically cross-filed with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission; employment cases are also cross-filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Housing cases are automatically cross-filed with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Iowa Civil Rights Commission and HUD register the charges and defer to the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission to conduct the investigation unless the Complainant specifically requests that the state or federal agency handle the case.
5. **ANSWER:** The Respondent is required to answer the charge and submit any requested records or relevant documents as requested.
6. **REBUTTAL:** When the Commission receives the Respondent's position statement to the charge of discrimination, the Complainant is given a copy of the response and the opportunity to refute the statements made by the Respondent and/or submit additional information.
7. **SCREENING:** All information is reviewed to determine whether further investigation is warranted.
  - a. If further investigation is not warranted, the complaint is administratively closed.

- b. If further investigation is warranted, the parties will be given the option of mediation (a no-fault settlement).
8. **MEDIATION:** Both parties must agree to mediate for this option to become available. If mediation is not mutually accepted by the parties or mediation fails, the complaint will be assigned to the investigation unit or a letter of *right-to-sue* may be requested (see below). Mediation is available throughout the investigative process, even if it initially fails.

***RIGHT TO SUE:** After the complaint has been on file for sixty (60) days, the Complainant can choose whether the complaint will remain with the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission for investigation and resolution or whether the complaint will be removed from the Commission and pursued by the Complainant in state district court. If the Complainant's choice is to take the case to court, the complaint will be administratively closed with the Commission and no further action will be taken.*
9. **INVESTIGATION:** During the investigation, each party is usually interviewed and additional records are collected. Witnesses may also be contacted and interviewed. When the investigation is complete, the investigator will analyze all of the collected information and write an investigative report.
10. **FINDING:** The investigative report is given to a Commissioner on the Civil Rights Commission who reviews the report and recommends whether probable cause or no probable cause exists that discrimination occurred.
  - a. If the Commission finds No Probable Cause, the complaint is closed. A No Probable Cause finding terminates the Complainant's right-to-sue with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.
  - b. If the Commission finds Probable Cause, the complaint will move to conciliation.
11. **CONCILIATION:** With a probable cause finding, the complaint is assigned a conciliator who will contact the parties and attempt to conciliate or settle the complaint.
12. **PUBLIC HEARING:** If the conciliation fails, the complaint will be reviewed to determine whether it should proceed to public hearing. If the complaint is selected for public hearing, an Administrative Law Judge will hear the case in accordance with the "Iowa Administrative Procedure Act." If not selected for public hearing, the complaint will be administratively closed and the Complainant may request a letter of right-to-sue with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.