

Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 2
April 2016

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April Celebrations

- Arab American Heritage Month
- Celebrate Diversity Month
- Fair Housing Month
- Genocide and Human Rights Awareness Month
- National Minority Health Month
- American Indian Awareness Week, April 10-16
- Equal Pay Day, April 5
- Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide, April 7
- Chinese Language Day, April 20
- Earth Day, April 22
- Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, April 24
- Arbor Day, April 29

Public Service Announcement – Service Animals in Housing

Over the past few months, the Commission has received a lot of community concerns regarding discrimination against people who have Service Animals in regards to housing and public accommodations. We also have landlords who are being proactive and reaching out to us about the topic of Companion and Service Animals.

To address this concern, we created a Public Service Announcement (PSA) on the topic of Service and Assistance Animals in respect to housing. Our goal is to make the community aware of the *issue, prevent discrimination in housing, and encourage community members to reach out to us for assistance.*

Check out our PSA that is provided below! We hope you enjoy! The PSA aired live on KGAN CBS 2 in the month of April.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JULJocAI18c>

Fair Housing Poster Contest

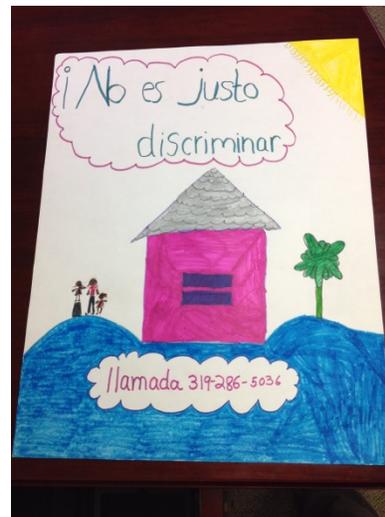
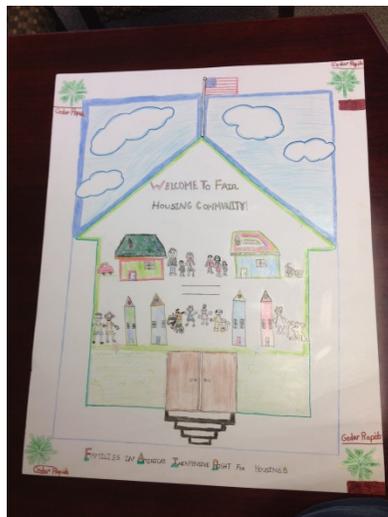
The Commission hosted their 2nd annual Fair Housing Poster Contest and the deadline for submissions was April 1st. We received a total of 35 entries with 14 entries in the K-5 age group and 21 in the 6-12 age group. Votes were cast to determine the top two winners in each age category. The winners, along with their poster, are listed below. We would like to thank all students who participated in this contest and we look forward to hosting this contest again in the future.

K-5 Age Group Winners:

First Place: Sujana Shadrak; West Field Elementary School
Second Place: Kasandra Flores; Hoover Elementary School

6-12 Age Group Winners:

First Place: Alicia Miltner; Xavier High School
Second Place: Cora Speighhalter & Baily Paul; Harding Middle School

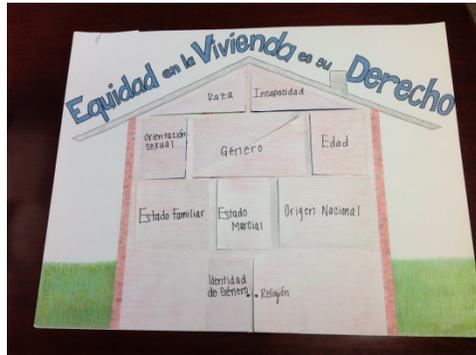


May Celebrations

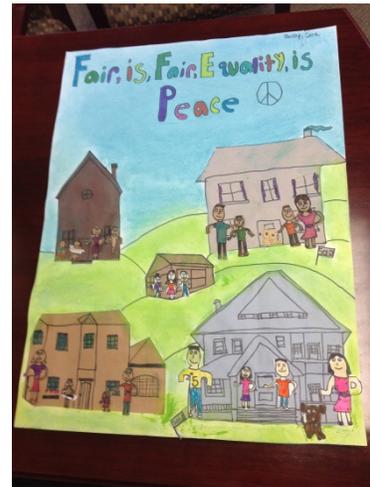
- Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Haitian Heritage Month
- Jewish-American Heritage Month
- Latino Books Month
- National Guide Dog Month
- National Mental Health Month
- National Anxiety & Depression Awareness Week, May 1-7
- Children's Mental Health Week, May 1-7
- May Day, May 1
- Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day), May 4
- Cinco de Mayo, May 5
- Mother's Day, May 8
- World Laughter Day, May 8
- American Indian Day, May 14
- World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development, May 21
- Memorial Day, May 30

June Celebrations

- African American Music Appreciation Month
- Caribbean-American Heritage Month
- National GLBT Pride Month
- PTSD Awareness Month
- Ramadan, June 6-July 5
- Say Something Nice Day, June 1
- Multicultural American Child Day, June 12
- Race Unity Day, June 12
- Native American Citizenship Day, June 15
- Father's Day, June 19
- Juneteenth, June 19
- World Refugee Day, June 20



Alicia Miltner; Xavier High School



Cora Speighalter & Baily Paul; Harding Middle School

Commission Hosts Fair Housing and Lending Training

On April 8th, nearly 50 area realtors, landlords, lenders, City staff, and the general public gathered at the Cedar Rapids Public Library to learn of the history and recent case law in the area of fair lending as it relates to housing. The information was presented by Professor Michael Seng of the John Marshall Law School Fair Housing Legal Support Center. The training was provided in partnership with the Cedar Rapids Area Association of Realtors.

Commission Hosts Second Mediation Training

Due to the first event being so well received a second session of Mediation was held on April 22nd at the Cedar Rapids Police Department Community Room. The event was once again facilitated by Annie Tucker of Eastern Iowa Mediation Services. Human Resource managers, landlords, neighborhood activists, City staff, and non-profit organizations were among the 41 people in attendance. This session included a mock mediation session.

Civil Rights Commission Executive Director accepts "Fair Housing Month" Proclamation

The City of Cedar Rapids presented the Civil Rights Commission Executive Director, LaSheila Yates, with a proclamation at the April 12, 2016 City Council meeting. The proclamation recognizes April 2016 as "Fair Housing Month." Mayor Ron Corbett and At-Large City Council Member Susie Weinacht presented the proclamation and Executive Director Yates gave a few remarks. Civil Rights Investigator, Judy Goldberg, was also in attendance at the meeting. The proclamation will be displayed at the Civil Rights Commission office, located on the 7th floor of the Veterans Memorial Building.

The video is available for review by clicking [here](#).



Mayor Ron Corbett and At-Large City Council Member Susie Weinacht present the "Fair Housing Month" Proclamation to Civil Rights Commission Executive Director LaSheila Yates

- Summer Solstice, June 21
- International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, June 26
- PTSD Awareness Day, June 27
- NOW (National Organization For Women) Day, June 30

**City of Cedar Rapids
Iowa**

Proclamation



Whereas, April 2016 marks the 48th anniversary of the passage of the U.S. Fair Housing Act, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, commonly known as the Federal Fair Housing Act; and

Whereas, the Act sought to open doors of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in housing and to affirmatively further Fair Housing; and as we celebrate the 48th anniversary of this historic legislation, we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that everyone has equal and fair access to housing; and

Whereas, Fair Housing assures individuals have the right to choose where to live without discrimination based on age, color, creed, familial status, gender identity, marital status, mental disability, national origin, physical disability, race, religion, sex, and/or sexual orientation; and

Whereas, in Cedar Rapids we want to be recognized as an open and inclusive community that is committed to providing Fair Housing and advocating for equal housing opportunity for all citizens and prospective citizens of Cedar Rapids; and

Whereas, Cedar Rapids' elected officials encourage all citizens and community organizations to celebrate the value of harmonious and diverse communities, and support the goal of Fair Housing for all people.

Now Therefore, I, Ron Corbett, Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim April 2016, as

“Fair Housing Month”

and begin a year-long commemoration of the Fair Housing Act in Cedar Rapids and do commend the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission for their enforcement of Federal, State and local Fair Housing laws.



April 2016
Date

Ron J. Corbett
Ron J. Corbett, Mayor

Upcoming Outreach

Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission (CRCRC) staff will be conducting outreach at many summer events. Please look for us in June at the Farmer's Market, CR PrideFest, Tanager Fest, the Asian Culture Festival, and Juneteenth. CRCRC staff will also continue to identify other opportunities for outreach and training.

Who We Are

Civil Rights Commission Staff:

- LaSheila Yates, Executive Director
- Janet Abejo, Senior Investigator, Mediator
- Bernie Walther, Investigator
- Judy Goldberg, Investigator
- Alicia Abernathy, Administrative Assistant, Intake Specialist
- Sophie Belter, Intern
- Briana Gipson, Intern

Civil Rights Commissioners:

- Emily Bowman
- Leland Freie
- Salma Igram (Vice Chair)
- Laura O'Leary
- Ashley Reynolds
- Keith Rippy (Chair)
- Robin Tucker
- Ruth White
- Keith Wiggins

Civil Rights Commission Meetings

Commission Meetings occur the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM and are open to the public.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

May 18, 2016

June 15, 2016

July 20, 2016

August 17, 2016

September 21, 2016

October 19, 2016

November 16, 2016

December 21, 2016

All meetings are held at Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission Office, 50 2nd Avenue Bridge. Agendas and minutes can be found on our website (www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights).

Any visually impaired or hearing impaired person needing assistance to participate in this meeting should contact Civil Rights at 319-286-5036 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.



Cedar Rapids Civil Rights



CRCivilRights

Your Civil Rights

It is unlawful to discriminate in the areas of **Employment, Education, Public Accommodations, Credit, and Housing.**

Complaints of unlawful discriminatory treatment must be based on a person's **Age, Color, Creed, Mental or Physical Disability, Familial Status, Gender Identity, Marital Status, National Origin, Race, Religion, Sex (gender), or Sexual Orientation.** These categories are called protected class characteristics. It is also unlawful to retaliate against a person because such person has lawfully opposed any discriminatory practice.