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## Message from the Interim Chair

Greetings Everyone,

It has been a very busy time for everyone at the PHRC. On June 19, we held our third annual Statewide Partnership Summit in Harrisburg. It was a packed house including representatives from many local human relations commissions, advisory councils, state agency EEOC staff, mediators and many other partner organizations. It was a great opportunity for all attendees to learn about hot topics and to network. These days it is more important than ever for us to build strong partnerships and combine our efforts with other groups and organizations that are also committed to ending discrimination.

The commission held its June monthly meeting in Pittsburgh on June 26 at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Homewood Branch. My thanks to Pittsburgh Regional Director, Lyle Wood, for being such a wonderful host and for all of his efforts in making the meeting a success. During lunch, we presented awards to some outstanding student leaders from the area. At the meeting we were able to listen to community members express their concerns to the PHRC on matters relating to public safety, lack of affordable housing, and educational opportunities for young people.

We are currently working to update our strategic plan. In July, the Commissioners will be meeting to advance that effort forward. Our first strategic plan covered the time period of 2014-2017. We are now working to plan for 2017-2020. Once completed this fall, we will make the document available on our website.

At the end of April, the PHRC posted Proposed LGBTQ Policy Guidance on our website for public comment. During the thirty day comment period, we received a significant number of comments on the draft guidance. Our staff is in the process of preparing a comment/response document. When that work is completed, staff will make recommendations to the full Commission. This is an important issue and we very much appreciate all the time and effort that went into the public comments.

We continue to meet with legislators to help them better understand the services and processes of the Commission, as well as the impact that recent budget cuts and hiring freezes have had on our ability to implement PHRC's mission. I'm proud of the work we do and how everyone is pulling together to protect the civil rights of the citizens of the commonwealth.

I hope you have a wonderful summer.

M. Joel Bolstein, Interim Chair

## Advisory Council News

Some of the PHRC's 10 Advisory Councils (AC) will be taking a summer hiatus and resuming their activities in September 2017. A quick overview of activities:

- Blair County is in process of recruiting members for the fall.
- Lancaster/Lebanon/Berks is addressing ELL and school busing issues in their area.
- Lehigh Valley is planning to meet with the new Allentown school administrator this summer.
- York County planned a fall series of presentations for members and the community.
- Centre County is holding a picnic in August to recruit new members.
- Montgomery County is holding their next meeting on August 14.
- Cumberland/Dauphin/Perry is seeking a new chairperson.

This fall, we hope to begin an advisory council in Erie County. If you or someone you know would be interested in joining, please contact Lyle Wood at [lwood@pa.gov](mailto:lwood@pa.gov)

Please see below for scheduled dates for upcoming meetings.

*The PHRC promotes equal opportunity for all and enforces Pennsylvania's civil rights laws that protect people from unlawful discrimination. It is our vision that all people in Pennsylvania are able to live, work and learn free from unlawful discrimination.*

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### Meetings for Advisory Councils

Johnstown – Cambria County Johnstown SD Admin. Bldg. 1091 Broad St, Johnstown Third Monday of every other month Next meeting: TBD	Monroe County TBD
Blair County Kings Restaurant 3000 6 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Altoona Last Tuesday of each month Next meeting: 8/27/17	Montgomery County Montgomery County Community College 340 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell Third Thursday of each month Next meeting: 8/14/17
Centre County State College Borough Bldg. S. Allen St., State College Second Wednesday each month Next meeting: 8/12/17	SouthWestPA (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington Co) For information contact Jelani Cooper at 717-783-8499 Third Wednesday of each month
Cumberland/Dauphin/Perry Co. 333 Market St., Harrisburg Second Tuesday of each month Taking Summer Hiatus Next meeting:	York County Crispus Attucks Center 605 S. Duke St., York Third Wednesday of the month Next meeting: 9/20/17
Lebanon/Lancaster/Berks HACC Lebanon Campus 735 Cumberland St. Lebanon Meet every other month Next meeting: 8/4/17	Lehigh Valley Northampton Community College Third Tuesday of the month Next meeting: 7/18/17

## Fair Housing Training Conference

# SAVE THE DATE!

PA Human Relations Commission's

# 1st Annual Fair Housing Training Conference

(Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

**Wednesday, August 9, 2017**

**7:45 AM – 3:30 PM**

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission Building  
700 S. Eisenhower Blvd. • Middletown, PA 17057

Guest Speakers:

Sheryll Cashin, Author of "Place, Not Race" Sara Pratt, Esq., Housing Expert

For information, contact [Nokum@pa.gov](mailto:Nokum@pa.gov)

## PHRC Partnership Summit

On Monday, June 19, 2017, the PHRC held their third annual Partnership Summit. Participants included stakeholders/partners, advisory council members, Interagency Task Force members and staff from state EEO offices and HRC members. Over 50 attendees participated in the day's activities. One of the best parts of the summit was networking with other participants. The Summit's agenda offered information on:

- The PHRC's year in review;
- An inspirational luncheon speaker: Tiffany Chang Lawson, Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission for Asian Pacific American Islander Affairs;
- A presentation on Transgender awareness by Joanne Carroll, President of TransCentralPA; and
- Breakout sessions on acceptance and awareness of cultural differences in policing; ADA/PHRA; support/service animals and community relations (presented by the Community Responders Network).

Photo: Tameka Hatcher speaks to the group about anti-bias policing.



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## June 26, 2017 Commission Meeting

The commission held its June monthly meeting in Pittsburgh on June 26, 2017 at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Homewood Branch. Pittsburgh Regional Director, Lyle Wood helped coordinate outreach efforts to let community members know about the purpose of the meeting.

During lunch, certificates were presented to ten outstanding student leaders from schools in the Homewood area. Parents, teachers and grandparents were also present at the certificate presentation to support the students. Students who received recognition are from: **Westinghouse Academy**- Alex Bryant, Shauntel Segars, Mae Knight, and Keyara Andrews; **Student Achievement Center** – Danielle Lewis and Re-Del Greer; **Faison PreK-5** – LaNatashia Gray-Rose; **Lincoln PreK-5** – Carlton Perry and Marshaia Poindexter.

At the meeting, Dr. Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent of Pittsburgh's public schools, presented the district's strategic plan and their goals for schools including those in the Homewood area. Attendees had an opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Hamlet and comment on the strategic plan.

Community members also were able to express their concerns on matters relating to public safety, the availability of affordable housing and educational opportunities for young people. We learned that many local citizens, groups and organizations in Homewood are working hard to ensure a better life for their families and neighbors while their neighborhood is experiencing many changes both socially and economically.

The PHRC hopes to partner with community organizations and agencies to help the community address areas of concern.

Also in attendance was former (and retired) PHRC Pittsburgh Regional Director, George Simmons.

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## PHRC Outreach Activities

The PHRC staff has been busy reaching out to communities with training and education. Here are some highlights:

- In April, the Pittsburgh Regional Office participated in the annual Thomas Enzerra Foundation dodgeball event in Washington, PA.
  - April 29, Harrisburg and Central Offices participated in the Harrisburg YWCA Race Against Racism.
  - On April 27, Jinada Rochelle participated in a training session (on fair housing fundamentals) with the Centre County Housing Authority.
  - In May, Josh Bartash joined others on WITF's Smart Talk to discuss possible private meeting of the KKK being held in Lancaster County.
  - Heather Roth and Jinada Rochelle provided housing training to the PA Association of Realtors in State College on May 3.
  - On May 4, Heather Roth, Carl Summerson and Katie Petruczok provided an overview of the PHRC to attorneys of the Office of General Counsel.
  - May 17, Tameka Hatcher provided Anti-bias training to Northampton County Sheriff's Department.
  - Interagency Task Force on Community Relations and Activities met on May 18 (speaker: Barry Rubuck, PSU professor on Hate/Bias) and June 15 (speaker: Carol Kuntz, PA Dept. of Education).
  - May 19, JoAnn Edwards and Christina Reese participated in an award ceremony for fourth grade students from Paul V. Fly Elementary School who participated in a civics and civil rights class. Certificates were given to the students. Local commissioners, legislators, judge, HRC commissioners, parents and grandparents attended.
  - May 23, Tameka Hatcher carried out anti-bias training with leadership of the PA Dept. of State.
  - May 26, Geoff Biringer carried out training for the Disability Network.
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## PHRC Outreach Activities - continued

- June 1, Tameka Hatcher presented at Leaders of Tomorrow Workshop series – local high school students participate in this program to learn community leadership.
- June 14, JoAnn Edwards presented at the Leadership and Learn Symposium.
- June 15, Tameka Hatcher participated in a Diversity Forum at Widener University and a Diversity Coalition at Camp Curtain YMCA.
- June 19, PHRC Partnership Summit.
- June 21, JoAnn Edwards participated in the School Equity Rally at the Capitol.
- June 26, PHRC Commission meeting at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh at Homewood.
- June 28, Heather Roth provided fair housing training at the PA Housing Finance Agency's Multi-Family Housing Conference.
- June 28 Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine spoke to PHRC staff members from Central and Harrisburg Regional Office in recognition of PRIDE Month.

### Photo Gallery



JoAnn Edwards received the HACC 2017 Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award. The award was presented to three outstanding individuals who graduated from the college that have made a difference in their community.

Photo: from left to right

HACC President, John J. "Ski" Sygielski,  
Awardees:  
Betty Snyder, Ronald Rebeck and JoAnn Edwards



Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine celebrates PRIDE Month with staff of PHRC. Dr. Levine spoke to the group about LGBTQ issues and her role as a professional in the Wolf Administration. Thank you, Dr. Levine! We thoroughly enjoyed your presentation.



For the past three years, the PHRC has participated in the awards ceremony for students of Paul V. Fly Elementary School in Montgomery County. East Norriton HRC has worked with 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Danielle Wechsler, to teach the students about community involvement and civil rights. At the end of the program, each student is asked to write an essay or create a poster/art project that reflects what he/she has learned. The award ceremony is held in the Montgomery County Court House. Parents, grandparents, local commissioners, elected officials and magistrate judge attended and students received certificates for their accomplishments.



June Commission meeting held in Homewood: From left to right: Ms. Sylvia Wilson, Pittsburgh School District, JoAnn Edwards, PHRC Executive Director, Mrs. Carwell, receiving certificate for daughter Fatima Hill, Dr. Raquel Yiengst, PHRC Commissioner and Vice Chair, M. Joel Bolstein, Esq. PHRC Commissioner and Interim Chair. Second row left to right: Mr. Carwell and Dr. Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent of Pittsburgh School District.