

# Civil Rights PA PHRC Newsletter

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## Please Note!

**PHRC**

*Philadelphia Office is*

**TEMPORARILY**

*(due to construction)*

*located at:*

**801 Market Street, 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Floor**

**Telephone:**

**215-560-2496**

## Message from the Interim Chair

Greetings Everyone,

It is hard to believe that the holidays are over and we are embarking on a brand new year!

We have had a very busy fall and beginning of the winter. In December, the commission held a special panel discussion at its public meeting on community relations/policing. We thank our panelists and Tameka Hatcher for educating us on this issue. The meeting was held in Philadelphia and brought together some experts to discuss programs that are working to reduce tensions in the community.

Staff have been busy attending community events, providing training to organizations upon request, working with schools that are experiencing discrimination among the student population, and disparate treatment from their administration. Please see the outreach activities section of this newsletter to learn more.

We thank Governor Wolf for appointing two new commissioners as well as Michael Hardiman, who was appointed last spring. They are Mayur Patel and Curtis Jones, Jr. Photos on page 7.

Mayur Patel is the co-founder and principle of Laughner and Patel Developers, a professional real estate and project management firm located in Harrisburg. Mr. Patel also serves on the board of the Capitol Regional Economic Development Corporation (CREDC).

Curtis Jones, Jr. is a Philadelphia City Council member, representing the 4<sup>th</sup> district. He has been a council member since 2008. He serves on a number of organizations' boards including the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency. I look forward to working with both commissioners Patel and Jones.

I thank our staff and all of our stakeholders for your ongoing support of the commission's efforts to fight discrimination.

M. Joel Bolstein, Interim Chair



## Advisory Council News

The PHRC is continuing to work with 10 Advisory Councils (AC) who serve as the PHRC’s “eyes and ears” in the community in regard to discrimination of all types and ensuring education equity occurs in all our school districts.

- Montgomery County AC last year, held a series of town hall meetings throughout the county to provide information on the AC and PHRC and is continuing to hold similar meetings again this year.
  - York County AC, and the York HRC are working together with the new West York Borough mayor to provide support and training to the borough council members and employees if needed. This came about due to the former mayor posting racist/biased comments on Facebook which subsequently led to his resignation. The York AC is also monitoring activities at the York Vo-Tech School, which experienced students carrying White Power signs after the presidential election. The Department of Justice initiated a SPIRIT program in December to help students take part in solutions. Community groups, PA Dept. of Education and PHRC remain available to help support students and school administrators.
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*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.*

*Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
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Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717.787.4410 (phone)  
717.214.0584 (fax)  
[phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov)  
[www.phrc.state.pa.us](http://www.phrc.state.pa.us)*

### Meetings for Advisory Councils

Johnstown – Cambria County Johnstown SD Admin. Bldg. 1091 Broad St, Johnstown Third Monday of every other month Next meeting: Mar. 20	Monroe County Is reforming and will have more information next newsletter.
Blair County Kings Restaurant 3000 6 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Altoona Last Tuesday of each month Next meeting: Jan. 31	Montgomery County Montgomery County Community College 340 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell Third Thursday of each month Next meeting: Feb. 16
Centre County State College Borough Bldg. S. Allen St., State College Second Wednesday each month Next meeting: Feb. 8	SouthWestPA (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington Co) For information contact Jelani Cooper at 717-783-8499 Third Wednesday of each month Next meeting: Feb. 15
Cumberland/Dauphin/Perry Co. 333 Market St., Harrisburg Second Tuesday of each month Next meeting: Mar. 13	York County Crispus Attucks Center 605 S. Duke St., York Third Wednesday of the month Next meeting: Feb.15
Lebanon/Lancaster/Berks HACC Lebanon Campus 735 Cumberland St. Lebanon Meet every other month Next meeting: March 30	Lehigh Valley Lehigh Valley Charter School 675 E. Broad Street, Bethlehem Third Tuesday of the month Next meeting: Feb. 21

## PHRC December 19 Meeting Held in Philadelphia

On December 19, the PHRC held its monthly business meeting in Philadelphia. As part of the public session of the meeting, a panel discussion took place on partnerships between the community, social services, schools and the police.

Panelists included Randy Duque, Deputy Director of Community Relations Division, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations; Kelvyn Anderson, Executive Director of the City of Philadelphia Police Advisory Commission; La'Tonya Bey-Gore, Police Diversion Liaison Officer with the Juvenile Justice Center of the Philadelphia Police Department; and Captain Kristal Turner-Childs, Commanding Officer of Pennsylvania State Police Troop L.

Tameka Hatcher, PHRC Outreach Coordinator, served as panel moderator.

Attendees represented local, state and federal organizations; legislators and staff; as well as police and PHRC staff.

Following the panel discussion, the audience had an opportunity to provide their thoughts and suggestions regarding PHRC's role in helping to develop positive community and police relationships throughout the commonwealth. It was suggested that the PHRC serve as a "connector" bringing partners to the table to help establish cooperative efforts that address community issues and also disseminate information on successful programs.

The PHRC feels that serving as a "connector" and disseminator of information is an important role in supporting community policing and similar programs.

Please note that PHRC offers diversity and cultural sensitivity training for police. For more information contact Tameka Hatcher at [thatcher@pa.gov](mailto:thatcher@pa.gov)

If you would like to find out more about community policing programs, contact us at [phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov)



(Left) Tameka Hatcher, center, moderates panel discussion. Panelists include: Randy Duque, far left; Kelvyn Anderson, left center; La'Tonya Bey-Gore, right center; and Kristal Turner-Childs far right. ( Right) Attendees listen to panel discussion.

**Save the Date:**

The PHRC along with Millersville University are holding a **School to Prison Pipeline Colloquium** on March 23, 2017 at Millersville University- Gordiner Hall. Featured speakers will be John Wetzel, Secretary of Corrections and Dr. Jamie Fader Temple University and author of Falling Back: Incarceration and Transitions to Adulthood Among Urban Youth. The colloquium is a half day event. Day begins with registration at 7:30 AM

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The PHRC has added Spanish questionnaires on our website! Take a look and find out more....

[www.phrc.pa.gov](http://www.phrc.pa.gov)

## PHRC Outreach Activities

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

- In October, Heather Roth, Geoff Biringer and Carl Summerson spoke at and participated in a diversity conference sponsored by the Hispanic American Center of Hanover. This was the seventh year the conference was presented. It is an opportunity for professionals and students to network in order to promote multicultural understanding.
- Heather Roth spoke at and participated in the Human Resource Professionals of Central PA annual conference.
- Tameka Hatcher carried out Fair Housing Five and the Haunted House book readings including one at the Lancaster Public Library.
- Tameka Hatcher participated in an entrepreneurial diversity event for students at Camp Curtain YMCA in Harrisburg.
- Provided diversity/police training to Northampton County Sherriff and staff.
- Tameka Hatcher and Jelani Cooper participated in SPIRIT program at Carlisle High School.
- Geoff Biringer, JoAnn Edwards, Christina Reese and Commissioners; Hardiman, Yiengst, Bolstein and Robinson attended a listening session at the Allentown Government Center to hear concerns of the community regarding Allentown School District. A Lehigh Valley Advisory Council has been established to help the community in addressing concerns relating to disparate treatment of minority students.
- In November, Tameka Hatcher participated in a workshop relating to strategies for improving life after institutionalization for returning residents at the Homes within Reach Conference.
- Tameka Hatcher attended a presentation sponsored by the Dauphin County Commissioners to address the school to prison pipeline. The presentation featured a Deputy Commissioner of Philadelphia City Police, Kevin Bethel, who established the Philadelphia Police School Diversion Program.

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## PHRC Outreach Activities continued

- Heather Roth provided a PHRC overview and anti-discrimination training to Centre County CareerLink, HACC Business Practices class and the Human Resource Association of Centre County.
- Pittsburgh Regional Office participated in a housing workshop sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh's School of Sociology.
- In December, Pittsburgh Regional Office staff attended a Unity Rally in Mt. Lebanon sponsored by Representative Dan Miller.
- Geoff Biring, Tameka Hatcher and Jelani Cooper took part in a SPIRIT program at York Vo-Tech.
- JoAnn Edwards, Heather Roth, Jinada Rochelle and Christina Reese attended a community education event at the Harrisburg Islamic Center. Local police, state police, the Governor's Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and PHRC spoke about supporting the Muslim community.
- JoAnn Edwards and Diana Medley attended the Unifying Our Communities: Responding to Hate, organized by the Inter Faith Center of the Greater Philadelphia
- PHRC teamed up with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. to offer "A Shower of Love for Seniors" at the Morrison Towers in Harrisburg. Lunch games and personal care items were provided to the residents of the facility.

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## Advisory Council News continued

- Cambria and Blair County ACs resumed meetings after the holidays. The Blair County AC is working with students to address housing issues in the county.
- Centre County AC continues to work with a local public broadcasting station in an effort to develop an educational program that will air on the station's website. The AC is working with the local housing authority to present a housing seminar and has asked Jinada Rochelle to be a presenter at the meeting.
- Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties AC is holding meetings every other month. On the off months they are holding committee meetings that address education and employment issues in these three counties.
- Southwestern PA (SWPA) AC continues to focus on issues related to education in southwestern Pennsylvania schools. The AC is monitoring school activities in several districts including Plum Township where the DOJ is implementing a SPIRIT program in mid-January.
- Lehigh County AC held their first official meeting on Dec. 5. The AC is working to address concerns of disparate treatment and educational opportunities for minority students in the district.
- Lebanon, Lancaster and Berks Counties met on Jan. 24. Their primary focus is the ELL program in the Lebanon schools and will have a tour of the program in February.

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### Successful Case Settlement!

An African American male filed a discrimination complaint alleging that Sales and Marketing Group, Inc. terminated him because his race and sex. The PHRC ordered Sales and Marketing Group, Inc. to pay more than \$100,766 to the former employee after the company terminated him because of his race and sex. The commission held a public hearing on appropriate damages after the Sales and Marketing Group, Inc. failed to answer former employee's PHRC complaint. The order took effect January 23, 2016.

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## PHRC Mediation Program

The PHRC Mediation Program remains an option for case resolution. This program provides an expedited process will resolve a discrimination claim.

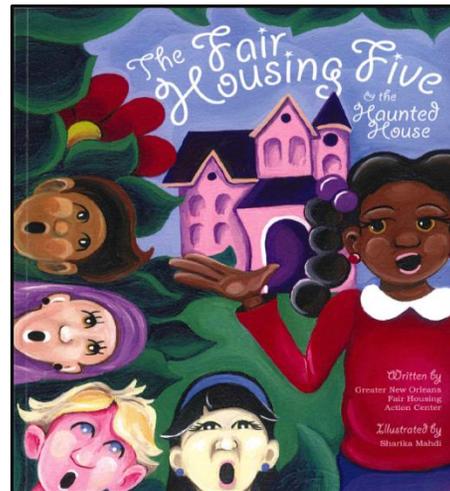
Due to the success of the program, volunteer trained mediators are needed to help the PHRC mediate cases.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer mediator, please contact Katherine Petruczok, Mediation Coordinator at 717-787-9537 or [kpetruczok@pa.gov](mailto:kpetruczok@pa.gov)



## Fair Housing Initiative is Continuing.....

PHRC provides a book reading session for schools, libraries, and organizations featuring the book, The Fair Housing Five and the Haunted House, which promotes understanding of housing discrimination. For information, contact [phrc@pa.gov](mailto:phrc@pa.gov).



## Upcoming PHRC Events

The PHRC has two events occurring in the spring of 2017.

### Partnership Summit

The annual Partnership Summit (formerly known as the HRC Summit) will be held on Monday, June 19, 2017 in Harrisburg. This year, we will be discussing issues such as community relations, community policing, service animals and transgender issues. So, mark your calendars for June, 19, 2017

### Special Commission Public Meeting on June 26, 2017

The PHRC will be holding its June Commission meeting in Pittsburgh at the Carnegie Library – Homewood Branch, 7101 Hamilton Street. This public session of the meeting will focus on general discrimination, as well as fair housing topics. Residents of the area are invited to attend. Further information will follow in the next PHRC Civil Rights Newsletter.

### Photo Gallery

#### PHRC New Commissioners



**Curtis Jones, Jr.**



**Mayur Patel**



**Michael Hardiman**



Karl Singleton, left, senior advisor to Harrisburg Mayor Eric Papenfuse, and Kevin Bethel, leader of a Philadelphia program to decrease minority youth arrests in Philadelphia. Both men spoke to Dauphin County commissioners about the program Mr. Bethel developed and Mr. Singleton a program he is leading in Harrisburg called the Disproportionate Minority Contact program. Tameka Hatcher attended this presentation.



Morgan Williams (Pitts. Reg. Office) captures a photo of the Unity Rally in Mt. Lebanon sponsored by Rep. Dan Miller.