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Message from the Interim Chair

Greetings Everyone,

I hope you had a nice holiday season and a happy new year.

The PHRC continues to work to address discrimination throughout the state. We currently have 76 employees and are in the process of hiring new intake and investigative staff.

As you may know, JoAnn Edwards resigned as Executive Director on January 12, 2018. We are presently recruiting to fill this position.



Michael Hardiman is currently serving as Interim Executive Director until the position is filled. Michael will remain a commissioner, but will not take part in voting while he holds the position. We thank Michael for his willingness to serve during this period.

I want to recognize Black History Month. This year the theme is “African Americans in Times of War.” We recognize those African Americans who have bravely sacrificed their lives for our country. PHRC held a morning session with speakers in recognition of the month on February 28.

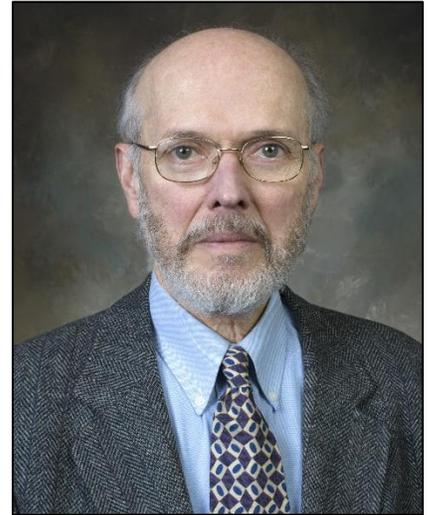
PHRC will hold its April 23, monthly Commission meeting in Montgomery County at the Montgomery County Community College. Also, we are preparing for our 2nd Annual Fair Housing Conference to be held on June. Please see page 5 for Save the Date notice for the housing conference.

In closing, I want to thank my fellow commissioners, our hard-working and dedicated staff, and our partners around the commonwealth for everything you do to fight discrimination.

M. Joel Bolstein

Meet Michael Hardiman Interim Executive Director

Michael Hardiman has been serving as Interim Executive Director of the PHRC after the resignation of JoAnn Edwards on January 12. Michael will serve until in this capacity until a permanent executive director is hired.



You can find out about Michael's background by visiting this link on the PHRC website. <http://www.phrc.pa.gov/About-Us/Staff/Pages/Executive-Director.aspx>. Many of you may know or have worked with Michael and know that Michael is committed to the PHRC. He has spent most of his

career working for this agency in various capacities and returned as a commissioner nearly two years ago. In addition to service as a PHRC commissioner, Michael has worked as Of Counsel for Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equality.

We thank him for his service and dedication to civil rights and PHRC.

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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Recognizing Black History Month

February is Black History Month. The event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating black history.

This year's theme is "African Americans in Times of War," honoring the men and women who served their country in the armed forces especially those who gave the ultimate sacrifice while defending American freedom and democracy.

Michael Hardiman spoke at the Commonwealth's Black History Month recognition program on February 27. State agencies came together to pay tribute to African Americans who serve their country during times of war. PHRC recognizes Black History Month and thank those African Americans who served our country in times of war. A celebratory reception was also held for the public at the Forum Auditorium.

Advisory Councils Meetings and Information

Cambia County Greater Johnstown High School 1091 Broad St., Johnstown Third Monday of month Next meeting: 3/19/18 @ noon	Monroe County – Is looking for someone to serve as chair for the advisory council.
Blair County Kings Restaurant 201 Sierra Dr., Altoona Last Tuesday of each month Next meeting: 3/27/18 @ noon	Montgomery County Montgomery County Community College 340 DeKalb Pike, Blue Bell Third Friday of each month Next meeting: 3/16/18 @ 10:00 AM
Centre County State College Borough Bldg. S. Allen St., State College First Thursday of each month Next meeting: 3/1/18 @ 7:30 PM	SouthWestPA (Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington Co) For information contact Jelani Cooper at 717-783-8499 Next meeting: – usually held by conference call @ 7:00 PM
Cumberland/Perry Co. Hope Station 149 Penn St. Carlisle Third Tuesday of each month Next meeting: 3/20/18 @ 3:30 PM	York County Crispus Attucks Center 605 S. Duke St., York Third Wednesday of the month Next meeting: 3/21/18 @ 5:30 PM
Lebanon/Lancaster/Berks HACC Lebanon Campus 735 Cumberland St., Lebanon Meet every other month Next meeting: 3/22/18 @ 2:00 PM	Lehigh Valley Northampton Community College Fourth Tuesday of the month 3835 Green Pond Rd., Bethlehem Next meeting: 3/27/18 @ 4:00 PM
Hazelton Hazelton One Community 225 East 4 th St., Hazelton Meet the last Wednesday each month Next meeting: 3/28/18	

Many of the PHRC's 11 Advisory Councils (AC) hold meetings during the winter and spring. Here are some of the highlights:

- Lancaster/Lebanon/Berks continue to focus on English Language Learners (ELL) programs and school busing issues in their area.
- Lehigh Valley continues to focus on educational equity issues.
- York County is holding a series of meetings at local businesses in the city and around the county. First meeting was held at a merchant in York in February.
- Centre County wants to recruit new members and is using social media to reach out to people in the community.
- Montgomery County will be participating in the April 23, 2018 Commission meeting being held at the Montgomery County Community College.
- Cumberland/Dauphin/Perry has reorganized as Cumberland/Perry. The AC is meeting now at Hope Station in Carlisle. New chair is Safronia Perry.
- Hazelton, the newly formed AC, had media coverage at its first meeting. The chair is Elaine Madden-Curry. The ACs main issue is educational equity.

Interested in joining? Please contact Geoff Biringner gbiringer@pa.gov.

2017-2020 PHRC Strategic Plan

As many of you know, the PHRC has been working to develop a strategic plan for 2017-2020. We began this process in the spring of 2017 and completed the process by the end of January 2018. This plan serves as a roadmap for PHRC in carrying out its mission to protect the civil rights of all Pennsylvanians. One step in the strategic planning process was to survey PHRC staff and commissioners. The survey asked the group to speak to the agency's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Participation was phenomenal! Responses were 68 percent participation from commissioners and executive staff responded to the survey; and 88 percent of the remaining staff participated.

PHRC's mission and values.

Mission

The PA Human Relations Commission promotes equal opportunity for all and enforces Pennsylvania's civil rights laws that protect people from unlawful discrimination.

Values

- **Equality** - We believe strongly in the equality and dignity of all individuals. We uphold the principles of justice and fairness through our work, conduct and communication.
- **Service** - We subscribe to the highest standards of responsiveness, quality, timeliness and professionalism.
- **Integrity** - We uphold the highest standards of honesty and transparency. We are candid, trustworthy, credible and unbiased.
- **Excellence** - We strive to excel in our work. We endeavor to ensure a highly prepared, diverse, competent and committed workforce.
- **Teamwork** - We build and sustain strong, constructive and collaborative relationships.
- **Respect** – We value employees' talents and differences and treat them with consideration and importance.

April Commission Meeting to be held in Montgomery County

The PHRC is planning to hold its April 23, 2018 meeting at Montgomery County Community College. April is the month that is recognized as Fair Housing Month. This year is particularly special, because it is the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Fair Housing Act.

Plans are underway to invite the public to attend the public session at 1:00 PM. Special recognition will be paid to Fair Housing Month. For more information contact Christina Reese chreese@pa.gov.

SAVE THE DATE!

PA Human Relations Commission's
2nd Annual
Fair Housing Conference



Guest Speakers:

Sara Pratt, Kristina Musante,
Jason Richardson and Janis Risch,
Housing Experts

For information, email: phrc.pa.gov

Thursday, June 14, 2018

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM

AFSCME Conference Center
150 South 43rd Street • Harrisburg, PA 17111

DON'T FORGET!

PHRC can provide free training for your organization.
Training options include:

- Hate and Bias
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Anti-harassment
- Sex discrimination
- Service/Support Animals
- Fair Housing

More information available at phrc@pa.gov

Now Available:

2016-17 Annual Report available under the Publications tab (annual reports) on the PHRC website.

<http://www.phrc.pa.gov/About-Us/Publications/Pages/default.aspx>

PHRC Outreach Activities

- Michael Hardiman and Lyle Wood attended an event hosted by Rep. Jake Wheatley honoring the 25th anniversary of the Advocates for African-American Students, a grassroots community group organized in 1990 in response to the plight of African-American students in the Pittsburgh Public School District. The event recognized their decades long fight and the anniversary of the complaint waged 25 years ago.
- Early January, Carl Summerson and JoAnn Edwards were interviewed on WHTM in Harrisburg about the PHRC and services it offers.
- PHRC staff met with CAIR to discuss issues and concerns of the Muslim community.
- In January, Christina Reese and Carl Summerson attended the York HRC Diversity Dinner. Carl was also one of the event's speakers. There were nearly 200 people who attended the event, which was held at York College.
- In February, Heather Roth provided anti-harassment training to businesses in Williamsport, East Stroudsburg and Harrisburg.
- Tameka Hatcher continues to participate in monthly Diversity Coalition meetings held monthly at Camp Curtain school in Harrisburg.
- PHRC continues to meet with the Partnership Equity Group which includes the governor's advisory commissions on Asian and Pacific Americans, Latino Affairs, African American Affairs and Disabilities as well as the PA Attorney General's office of Civil Rights to address current issues and concerns.
- In February, Tameka Hatcher along with the Center for Safe Schools and U.S. Dept. of Justice representatives carried out a SPIRIT program at Cumberland Valley High School.

In February, PHRC attended Information Sessions sponsored by the PA Department of State for evacuees from Puerto Rico seeking refuge in Lancaster, Lebanon, York, Bethlehem, Allentown and Reading. Top left photo: Commissioner Raquel Yiengst provided support at PHRC table in Reading.

