

Advocating for equal opportunity, justice, and access in the City of Riverside to services and opportunities...Fostering mutual understanding and respect between people; encouraging education and outreach; developing and promoting programs which work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination.

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***2003 ANNUAL REPORT
of the
CITY OF RIVERSIDE
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION***

Introduction

This is the second edition of the Human Relations Commission's annual report. The purpose of this report is to present to the public an insight as to the work of the commission in advocating for equal opportunity, justice, and access to services and opportunities in the City of Riverside.

The Human Relations Commission is charged with fostering mutual understanding and respect between people; encouraging education and outreach; developing and promoting programs which work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination.

The report is divided into eight sections starting with this introduction. This year we have included the chairman's message followed by a section that introduces our commissioners and their background. Next we introduce the executive staff followed by the commission's rules and bylaws. Finally, a report of our current and proposed programs is included with sections devoted to our new Eastside Youth Advisory Council and event photographs from some of our events/activities during 2003/2004.

We hope you find this report useful and enjoyable to read. If you have any questions about this report, feel free to call our office staff at (951) 826-5709 or at (951) 826- 5302. You can also e-mail us at hrc@riversideca.gov or visit our website at www.riversideca.gov/hrc.

Message from the Chairman

By A.J. Wilson

2003-2004 A year of Bridge Building!

Creating a more positive relationship between the Riverside Police Department and members of the Riverside Community!

Developing youth leadership from the diversity of the East End neighborhood!

Seeking greater participation of the cities youth in the future of their community!

Supporting the creation of a support network for Asian residents in the City of Riverside!

Monitoring the progress of minority members of the community in education, employment, health care, and criminal justice!

Putting a complaint system in place to insure access for all in Riverside to justice and equal treatment!

Building a positive relationship with our Muslim community through development of a relationship with a Middle Eastern Sister City!

These were just some of the initiatives of the Riverside Human Relations Commission during the last year. They are designed to build bridges between groups and individuals in our diverse urban community. They are conducted through the tireless efforts of members of the Commission with the support of the city staff.

This report presents in greater detail the activities and programs of the Commission. From the Study Circles Dialogues to Access Riverside, from the East Side Youth Commission to Youth Membership on the Commission, from the Police Liaison Program to Outreach at Community Events by Commission members. We have taken seriously our responsibility to build positive relationships in the community and to insure the community addresses any issues of discrimination or unequal treatment.

We hope you will enjoy the opportunity to review our efforts.

AJ Wilson
Chair,
Riverside Human Relations Commission

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

What is the Human Relations Commission?

The Human Relations Commission (formally known as the Community Relations Commission), established in 1966 through the passage of Ordinance #3389, was created to ensure that all community members of the City of Riverside receive or participate in:

1. Equal justice before the law;
2. Equal socio-economic and political opportunities;
3. Protection of dignity and integrity of every individual;
4. Responsible citizenship;
5. Responsive redress of grievances;
6. Equitable opportunities in health, housing, education, and employment;
7. Respect and support of the law;
8. Education related to basic human rights and responsibilities;
9. Reduction and eventual elimination of prejudice among people based on race, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

What does the Commission do?

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) creates access for Riverside community members to a complaint and referral system which can seek justice in cases where they perceive discrimination in employment, use of public facilities, availability of housing, delivery of public services, and disparate treatment in the criminal justice system.

Our commission evaluates community progress in achieving equal opportunities for protected groups to achieve access to education services, employment and economic opportunities, health services, and access to public services.

Finally, the HRC enhances inter-group education, outreach, and interaction to build bridges between the diverse groups within our City, using tools such as Study Circles, Dinner Dialogues, and mediation training to conduct community events that facilitate the occasions for positive interaction.

Who can serve on the Commission?

Commissioners are registered voters who reside in the City of Riverside. They are appointed to the Commission by the City Council and serve staggered terms on a volunteer basis. The individuals may hold no paid office or employment with the City of Riverside. Those chosen come from diverse backgrounds which include education, medicine, health and welfare, law, real estate, business, finance, law enforcement, and labor. In addition, they also represent various ethnic and racial groups.

How do you apply for the Commission?

Individuals interested in serving on the commission should file an application with the City Clerk's Office year round. Each February Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and the City Council to fill vacancies.

When and where does the Commission Meet?

The Commission meets in various parts of the City, the third Thursday of each month.

How can the Commission serve those in Riverside?

If you are in need of assistance, unsure where to go for action, or would like to appear before the Commission... all you need to do is call the Office of Human Relations at (909) 826-5709 or (909) 826-5302. The address for correspondence with the Commission or Commissioners is: 3900 Main St. 6th Floor Riverside, CA, 92522



MEET OUR COMMISSIONERS

The Human Relations Commission is composed of 21 volunteer residents of the City of Riverside who are appointed by the City Council. Each commissioner serves for a period of four years with a term limit of two consecutive terms. As much as possible, commissioners are appointed from an ethnically and socially diverse pool of candidates.

Our commission is very proud of its diversity in terms of its ethnicity, gender, and age composition. Currently our commission is composed of nine White commissioners, six African-American commissioners, five Latino commissioners, and one Middle Eastern commissioner. Of these, twelve are female and nine are male. Ages range from 16 to 50+ years of age. This includes two ex-officio high school student members representing the Riverside and Alvord Unified School District.

2003/2004 commissioners are:



Chani Beeman Chani Beeman has served on the Riverside City Human Relations Commission since November 2002 and served as Commission Chairwoman from January 2002 – March 2004. Chani has an abiding connection to Riverside. It is her hometown and the town in which she raised two sons. She is also the Chairwoman of the Community Advisory Committee to the Chief of Police and a board member of the Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate. Her commitment to the community has included involvement in several grassroots community organizations, including being a founding member of the Riverside Coalition for Police Accountability, which focused on police department reforms. Chani considers it a privilege to work on committees, community groups and commissions with former teachers and community leaders whom she has viewed as her role models. Raised on the notion of civic responsibility she has developed a strong sense of commitment to making Riverside a positive and inclusive community.



Ruth Brewer has lived in the City of Riverside for 45 years. She is the mother of four. She has worked with Security Pacific Bank for 25 years. She has extensive organizational experience including the Riverside County Juvenile Justice Commission, the Grand Jurors Association, and the Youth Accountability Board. She served 6 years as Volunteer Probation Officer working in diversion programs with juvenile offenders. Mrs. Brewer has recently retired from the Human Relations Commission.



Lisa Marie Dryan has a Master's Degree in Social Work from USC where she specialized in community organization, planning and administration. For the past 10 years, Lisa has worked as a clinician, fundraiser, community organizer, and in program development for Riverside County Department of Mental Health - Children's Services. Her specialized interest is in finding concrete ways to reduce poverty in Riverside County and she has volunteered her time for the past 5 years advocating for the needs of families with children aged birth to 5. She is the mother of two children, one of whom has cerebral palsy.



Sherry Gordon is an 18-year resident of Riverside. She has been employed with the law firm of Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo since 1989 and is currently the managing partner of the firm's Riverside office. She represents California school districts and community college districts in education law and labor relations. Ms. Gordon specializes in employee discipline and termination, discrimination claims, unfair practice charges, negotiations, and student discipline matters. She has a California standard elementary credential and a reading specialist certificate and taught for 14 years in the Ontario-Montclair School District before receiving her Juris Doctor degree.



Paul Green Dr. Paul E. Green is a 7 year resident of Riverside. He is a Professor of Educational Politics, Social Policy and the Law in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Riverside and an active member in the United States Coast Guard Reserves. He also serves a Board Member of the Riverside YMCA, Mayors Multicultural Forum, Governor's Commission on Teacher Credentialing, among other national committees.

Bernie Gutierrez has been a resident of Riverside for over 3 years. Mr. Gutierrez has over 20 years experience in public affairs. His community experience includes the Greater Riverside Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, and the Urban League of Riverside.



Aric Isom is a 11-year resident of the city of Riverside, and a graduate of the Blueprint for Volunteer Diversity program at the United Way. He is currently entering into his third year as an HRC commissioner and volunteers with a number of local community organizations. He is a member of the American Diabetes Association, the American Cancer Society, the Riverside Junteenth Committee, and has worked with the American Red Cross, and the Boy Scouts Of America. Aric also likes to participate in Walk-a-Thons, long distance bike rides, and other fund raising events.



Claudia Johnson is a Supervised Visitation Monitor for Riverside County Family Court referred clients. She is Co-founder of Inland Association of Supervised Visitation Monitors, Inc. An organization established in 2003 to provide training and support for professional supervised visitation monitors. She is a graduate of Blue Print for Volunteer Diversity and a life member of NCNW.



Kelly Keenan is a 14-year resident of Riverside. Prior to moving to Riverside, he spent five years in the U.S. Navy. He is currently employed as a Supervising Deputy District Attorney with the Riverside County District Attorney's Office. He supervises the Major Crimes Unit which includes prosecution of gang and hate crimes. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and the University of San Diego School of Law. He is a member of the Steering Committee for Project Bridge.



Haydee M. Llanes Educator, born in Havana, Cuba. Left Cuba for political reasons; resided in Spain before coming to the US in 1970. Happily married for forty-five years to Armando A. Llanes; have two children and four grandchildren. Holds a Doctorate in Education and a Master's degree in Rehabilitation, Area of Deafness. Taught at the California School for the Deaf Riverside (CSDR) for twenty-nine years (primarily Sciences, in the High School Department). Also, taught Spanish as an elective subject. Worked with handicaps other than deafness: autism, speech impediments, Down syndrome, multiple handicaps, emotional handicaps, and other disabilities. Also worked with regular students, teaching a variety of subjects.



Luz Negron, Puerto Rican, a mother and a grandmother is a 18-year resident of Riverside. She is currently employed as a Volunteer Services Coordinator for Children Services with the Riverside County Department of Mental Health. She is the chair person of the Riverside Municipal Museum Associates Multicultural Council , Board Member of the Riverside Community Art Association and Mujeres Boricuas, a Puerto Rican women organization. Also member of the Chicano-Latino Advisory Committee for the Chancellor U.C.R. campus and member of Latino C.R.E.A.

Khaled Othman was born and raised in Jerusalem Palestine. Years ago he immigrated to the USA and he is a 30 years resident of Riverside. Khaled is the Riverside County Subdivision Engineer. He is licensed Professional Engineer in the State of California; and he is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the American Public Works Association.



David St. Pierre is a 12 year resident of Riverside. Mr St. Pierre is a downtown business owner. Mr. St. Pierre is a former 2 term chair of the commission and currently sits as vice chair. He is also a founding member, past president and current treasurer of the Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate. Mr. St Pierre is also a member and second vice chair of D.A.N.A. (Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance.)

Marisa Valdez-Yeager was born and raised in Riverside, Ca. She is currently employed as a Government and Board Relations Administrator (Federal Affairs) for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA). She is a Board Member, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE); Member, American Society for Public Administration; and, Member, Latino Network.



Gladys Walker Gladys is a 36 year resident of Riverside. Currently, she is employed with the Riverside Unified School District as an Assistant Superintendent with supervisory responsibilities that include Secondary Education. A Leadership Riverside graduate, she has volunteered her time to several community organizations including the Riverside County YWCA, United Way and the Riverside Educational Enrichment Foundation. She is a member of the California Association of School Administrators (ASCA) and California Public Policy Institute Advisory Board.



Sonya Walker is a 8-year resident of Riverside. She is a freelance writer, substitute teacher and book review editor. She serves as the Chair of the Education and Outreach subcommittee, a liaison to the Eastside Youth Advisory Council and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Visiting Nurses Association of the Inland Empire.



A.J. Wilson is the Chair of the Human Relations Commission, he resides in the Magnolia Center area, presently is the Executive Director of the Pomona Valley Educational Foundation. His is retired from a 25 year career in public administration which included 8 years as the Executive Director of the Western Riverside Council of Governments and City Manager positions in Santa Ana, Pomona, Kansas City and St. Louis Missouri, and Portland Maine. He chairs community nonprofit boards including the Trustees of the First Congregational Church in downtown Riverside. He is the author of a number of articles on issues of civil rights in urban centers.

Serving as alternate commissioners are:



Christina Duran has been a resident in Riverside for over 8 years. She has a deep concern about social issues and the youth. She has served as Youth Director at March Field Christian Church. Her civic and community experience includes the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership, the Eastside neighborhood Advisory Committee, Cops & Clergy, People Reaching Out, Mothers Against Gangs, and Community Alliance Network.



Rosemary Heru has been a resident of the City of Riverside for over 15 years. She is a Notary Public and a Certified Mediator with dispute resolution experience. She has 10 years experience in management in company mergers and team project management. She is currently a member of the Riverside County Dispute Resolution Center.



Robert St. Genis Marketing Consultant for Clear Channel Communications, owners of KGGI-FM, KTDD-AM, KKDD-AM and KDIF-AM. Previously on Board of Directors of Desert Business Association (Palm Springs) and was Media Officer for the Free State Justice Campaign (Maryland). Served as a Federal lobbyist for the Campaign for Military Service. Served on fundraising committees for Inland AIDS Project, the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center and AIDS Healthcare Foundation.

Serving as Ex-officio student commissioner:

Billy Phu is a Riverside native and a senior at Martin Luther King Jr. High School. He is Martin Luther King's newly elected ASB Vice-President for the year 2005. Billy is also Activities Director in the STAND Club (Students Together And Naturally Diverse), a group that promotes tolerance among high school and its community. In addition to Billy's contribution to Martin Luther King, Billy trains in Kung-Fu, a style of martial arts in which he has been training in for over six-years. Billy works for Business West Mortgage as a Junior Loan Officer in Riverside." Billy serves on the Human Relations Commission as the first ex-officio student representative.

EXECUTIVE STAFF

The Human Relations Commission is staffed by a full-time Executive Director and a full-time Administrative Analyst. Both these positions are paid city employees. The Executive Director reports directly to the City Manager.



Dr. Pedro R. Payne is the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission for the City of Riverside. He recently received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California, Riverside. His research focuses on racial/ethnic relations and socio-legal studies. Previous to his current position, Dr. Payne served as the program manager for the Arlanza Neighborhood Initiative—a youth violence prevention project piloted in the Arlanza neighborhood of Riverside. His publications include an encyclopedia article entitled '*Dominican Americans*' in Racial and Ethnic Relations in America and '*Power, Politics, and African Americans*' in the Journal of Political Sociology. A trained mediator, Dr. Payne is fluent in Spanish and has lived in the Riverside area since 1995.



Jenna McAlmond was born and raised in Riverside, Jenna McAlmond has worked with the Human Relations Commission since 1998. As an Administrative Analyst, she works with the Executive Director to implement the many goals and objectives of the Human Relations Commission. Jenna attended California Baptist University with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. She is also the proud mother of seven year old Alyssa. Jenna is a mediator trained by the U.S. Department of Justice and recently completed training with the National Multicultural Institute.

Year at a Glance

The 2003-2004 fiscal year turned out to be a very successful year for the Human Relations Commission (HRC). Through various events and programs, the commission was able to engage our local residents in working together to accomplish our goal of making Riverside an inclusive community.

Whether it was talking to young people about diversity, holding the first ever Spanish Study Circles in the country¹, partnering with the police on educational activities, or providing a forum for residents to discuss key social issues – the HRC took important steps this year in advocating for equal opportunity, justice, and access in the City of Riverside. What follows is a very brief snapshot of our various accomplishments throughout the year.

- ***In July of 2003 the HRC held 'Study Circle' discussion groups in police areas 1, 2, and 5 of the city. Approximately 50 residents participated in a series of four meetings at La Sierra Community Center, Reid Park, and Cesar Chavez Community Center. The purpose of these meetings was to engage the community in candid dialogue on the issue of police/community relations.***
- ***During the past year the HRC initiated and helped organize the development of the city's first Asian American group. Led by Pastor Sysay Vilaylack, the group is now known as the 'Asian American Resource Center of Riverside'.***
- ***From September 27 to October 1st of 2003, the HRC and the City of Riverside celebrated 'Race Equality Week'. Following a proclamation from the Mayor of Riverside, approximately***

¹ According to the Study Circles Resource Center in Pomfret, CT.

25 youths painted a mural at the Villegas Center with the theme "Being Young in Riverside."

- *According to the Study Circles Resource Center, the Riverside HRC sponsored the first ever Spanish language Study Circles conducted in the country. They took place in November of 2003 in the neighborhoods of Arlanza and the Eastside. Approximately 60 Spanish speaking residents participated in this series of four meetings to discuss ways in which to build stronger communities, improve race relations, work better with the local police.*
- *During the local elections of 2003 the HRC partnered with the City Clerk's Office to set up a Spanish language hotline to make available voter information for our Spanish speaking residents.*
- *During the 2003-2004 fiscal year the HRC drafted two resolutions that affect the lives of Americans everywhere. Both the Patriot Act Resolution and the Same Sex Marriage Resolution can be found in Appendices A and B of this report.*
- *Throughout the year the HRC seeks to explore various issues that affect our local community by periodically inviting city staff to make presentations to the HRC. Last year these included;*
 - *Police Lieutenant Jeff Callopy who spoke on the Police Officer's Bill of Rights in January of 2004.*
 - *Police Chief Russ Leach who presented the new police precinct model in October of 2003.*
 - *The Homeless Task Force made a presentation in November of 2003.*
 - *The City of Riverside City Clerk addressed various issues associated with the local elections of 2003.*

- ***In addition to city staff the HRC also seeks input from local community groups on issues such as poverty and police/community relations. Last year these included;***
 - ***The Fair Housing Council of Riverside***
 - ***The Department of Community Action***
 - ***Riverside County Office on Aging***
 - ***The Dispute Resolution Center of Riverside County.***
- ***In April of 2004 the HRC held its second annual Friendship Fair designed to bring people of different cultural backgrounds together for a time of recreation and social interaction. Approximately 200 people participated in this event which took place at Bordwell Park. Activities included multicultural music, international food tasting, games, various informational booths including a home buyer expo, art exhibits, and prizes.***
- ***The commission provided diversity training to the Eastside Youth Advisory Council (EYAC) in February 2004. Later that year, the EYAC group received a \$500 sponsorship from the HRC for one of their local events.***
- ***In March of 2004 the HRC held a public discussion forum in partnership with the ACLU to discuss the issue of same sex marriages.***
- ***In May of 2004 the HRC made a change to its By Laws to include two student ex-officio members to the commission. Students were appointed by the City Council from both the Riverside and Alvord Unified School Districts.***

- ***During the past year the HRC has conducted two separate study circles with students from Sierra Middle School and Amelia Earhart Elementary School. The topic for both series was how to improve youth/police relationships, discuss the issue of bullying, race relations, and helping youth and police to look at life through each other's eyes. Approximately 60 students participated in these sessions.***

All of these activities and events were possible because everyone involved recognized the need to work together in partnerships to reach out to the people of our community. As we hold these events we learn what works and what does not work while seeking to improve the programs and activities as needed. Next year promises to be even more exciting with the development of our new program called 'Dinner Dialogues.'

Dinner Dialogues will be organized in homes throughout Riverside to give residents from many cultures and backgrounds the opportunity to talk to each other, share their lives and learn about one another.

The dialogues provide a forum for participants to explore cross-cultural differences and commonalities and come together to determine proactive steps we can take to keep our community united. These Dinner Dialogues help promote respect and understanding between our diverse residents.

We believe that sitting down to dinner together provides residents an opportunity to really get to know and understand people of different cultures, lifestyles, and religions. It's just like when we sit down for dinner with our families, except that in this case, we are sharing our table with those we probably don't socialize regularly with.

Potential topics include:

- racism and race relations
- immigration
- diversity
- youth concerns
- police-community relations

- building strong neighborhoods and more.

We hope that as you read about these activities and events you will feel inspired to join us in making Riverside a 'Most Livable Community.' If you want more information about the programs and activities summarized here, please do not hesitate to call us to find out how you too can roll up your sleeves and get involved. We look forward to hearing from you!

You can contact us at:

City of Riverside
Human Relations Office
3900 Main Street, 6th Floor
Riverside, CA. 92522
Tel. (951) 826-5709/5302
Fax (951) 826-2190

Description of 2003/2004 Programs

Community Study Circles

When people talk and work together...the result is a healthier community – with healthier children, better school performance, and safer neighborhoods.”

– Martha L. McCoy, Study Circles Resource Center.

What do study circles look like?

A study circle is comprised of 8—12 people who meet regularly (usually once a week for four weeks) to address a critical public issue in a democratic and collaborative way.



They are facilitated by an impartial person who is there not to act as an expert on the issue, but to help the group by keeping the discussion focused on the topic, helping the group consider a variety of views, and asking difficult questions.

The usual format for a study circle is to begin with introductions and a review of the “ground rules.” Participants agree to respect others and not interrupt when others are speaking. Everyone agrees to speak from personal experience and not from what they ‘think’ others are feeling.



PURPOSE: The purpose of the “Study Circles” is for people from all parts of the community to meet in these small groups to talk about issues affecting their community. Each study circle session involves a once a week meeting for four weeks. This format allows sufficient time for the community to participate in the solution for specific

issues of concern. This initiative includes a round of continuing Study Circles not only for adults, but for youths as well. Plans are to continue to offer middle school youth study circles for the City of Riverside. Some study circles are conducted entirely by the Human Relations Commission while other sessions are conducted in partnership with the Riverside Police Department.

During the 2003/2004 fiscal year, we conducted two series of middle school study circles at Sierra Middle School and Amelia Earhart Middle School. In November 2003, two Spanish language sessions were held in Arlanza and the Eastside neighborhoods for over 45 adult and young residents. The study circle



initiative also includes any required follow up as a result of the issues discussed at the meetings.



Who sponsors these study circles?

The Human Relations Commission sponsors study circles in various parts of the City of Riverside. In the past, the commission has partnered with other agencies to hold these meetings.

Can I start my own study circle?

Definitely yes! We can help you organize your own study circle in your community. We can provide



you with materials and training upon your request.

How can I find out more about these study circles?

If you are interested in participating in a study circle near you... all you need to do is call the Office of Human Relations at (951) 826-5709 or (951) 826-5302. The address is: 3900 Main St. 6th Floor, Riverside, CA, 92522.

Friends Across the Lines



In an effort to bring together as one community the diverse population of Riverside, the Human Relations Commission sponsors annual "Friendship Fairs" as part of the *Friends Across the Lines* program. These events are designed to promote friendships across differing religions, ethnic groups, sexual orientations, and physical abilities. The purpose is to get us to step over

any perceived line that separates us.

This program provides yet another forum for people with different backgrounds to come together and interact in social setting. Past events included a bowling tournament, multi-cultural food tasting, art exhibits, multi-cultural music, games, prizes and free giveaways.



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Race Equality Week

Race Equality Week (Sept 27 - Oct 1, 2003) - This is a National Program to observe a week of celebrating diversity, to promote initiatives that promote race equality, and to pledge continued efforts to promote race equality.



The National League of Cities' promotes Race Equality Week to raise awareness about racism and spotlight the efforts of cities working to reduce racial tensions and build bridges across racial boundaries. Cities across the country celebrate Race Equality Week in different ways. From diversity fests and community dialogues to library displays and

multicultural concerts. Past participation for the City of Riverside included an essay contest, and a mural project.

These events spotlight issues surrounding racism in America and what cities can do to promote diversity and strengthen ethnic relations. Issues like racial profiling, predatory lending, fairness in hiring practices, and affordable housing are among the issues



that NLC focuses on. Many cities use this week to kick off new race initiatives and programs to promote race equality in their communities.

The City of Riverside has been participating in Racial Equality Week for the last two years. In September of 2002, the National League of Cities highlighted Riverside, Ca. as an example of cities who are committed to addressing the issue of racism through a Race Equality Week event. They state,

*"The city of **Riverside, Calif.** is hosting a an essay contest for grades 1 through 12 on the topic of "What Can Be Done to Improve Race Relations in the City of Riverside." Riverside has also created a statement entitled "Building a More Inclusive Riverside Community." It has been distributed throughout the city is asking for organizations to adopt and support the statement." -- The National League of Cities, 2002.*

Riverside Report Card

Human Relations Commission

2003 Human Relations
Report Card

*2nd Annual Benchmark Report on Education, Housing,
Economics, Criminal Justice, and Health*

Office of Human Relations
(951) 826-5709/www.riversideca.gov/hrc

CITY OF RIVERSIDE
BE A PART OF IT

The City of Riverside Human Relations Commission is charged with the task of reporting annually on the state of inter-group relations and civil rights in the City of Riverside. The Commission has determined that an important element of the report needs to be the ongoing measurement of the actual economic, social, and political progress of minorities and other protected groups within the city. Benchmarks should be established to provide a basis for such measurement. While building trust

and improving relations between groups remains a vital goal, the ultimate test is the actual progress towards equality of opportunity and outcome for all the community.

This year's Report Card highlighted several important trends in our community that calls for our attention. These include:

- There is an unequal ethnic and socioeconomic student distribution between both school districts.
 - Higher free/reduced meal participants in Alvord Unified School Districts.
 - Higher English learner participants in Alvord Unified School Districts.
- There exists a low educational attainment in our city as compared to the state.
- The standardized testing performance for white students is low.
- There is an inability of disabled persons to gain employment as compared to state figures.
- There exists a high level of housing discrimination based on race.
- There is an unequal loan denial rates based on race.
- The data shows an unequal representation of African Americans in traffic stops.

ACCESS RIVERSIDE

Human Relations Commissions throughout the country have different ways in which they handle citizen's grievances or complaints. In general, commissions that serve a large city, county, or State have a complaint process that makes use of full time investigators on staff. Many of these also have a mediation option available through the local courts for the parties involved. Other smaller jurisdictions like the Human Relations Council of the Hemet and San Jacinto Region rely on a referral system for

handling community complaints. These smaller councils lack the budget and resources necessary to conduct their own investigations. The Human Relations Commission of the City of Riverside is an example of this latter type.

In August 26, 2003, the City of Riverside made amendments to Sections 2.16.020 and 2.16.030 of City Ordinance #6704 entitled, "An Ordinance of the City of Riverside, California." This memo specifically addresses the Standing Rules of the Human Relations Commission of the City of Riverside, Section B, item #7: "To recommend and coordinate effective systems to insure equal justice and access for The City of Riverside." As such, Access Riverside was developed to address this mandate.

How does Access Riverside work?

Access Riverside discrimination complaint forms are available on-line at www.riversideca.gov/hrc, or at our offices at 3900 Main Street, 6th floor, Riverside, CA. 92522. You may also request a form by mail by calling (951) 826-5302.

Upon receiving your complaint form, our office staff will contact both parties to verify preliminary information. Our office will then make available to both parties the option of participating in a voluntary dispute resolution program provided by the Community Action Partnership of Riverside County. The program is basically a mediation process whereby conflict resolution is assisted by a neutral third party through active listening, understanding, exploration of options and compromise. For this reason we believe that participation in voluntary conflict mediation is a win-win alternative to small claims court.

Any information and discussion that takes place throughout this process is confidential in accordance to California Evidence Code Section 1152.5. The process also eliminates the need for time consuming and costly legal hearings and trials. Participation costs only \$10 for each participant.

Examples of disputes include:

- Landlord/Tenant
- Harrasment
- Neighbor/Neighbor
- Small Claims
- Employer/Employee
- Consumer/Merchant
- Business/Business
- Adult Guardianship
- Victim/Offender Mediation
- Domestic (Divorce, Child visitation, Marital settlement agreements).

In the event that one or both parties wish not to take advantage of the low cost dispute resolution program, our office staff will refer your case to State of California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH).

About DFEH

In 1980, DFEH was established as an independent department charged with enforcing California's comprehensive employment, housing, public accommodations and public service non-discrimination laws, as well as the State's bias-related hate violence law.

DFEH's statutory mandate is to protect the people of California from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations pursuant to the *California Fair Employment and Housing Act*, Government Code section 12900, et seq., the *Unruh Civil Rights Act*, Civil Code section 51, et seq., and the *Ralph Civil Rights Act*, Civil Code section 51.7.

DFEH has jurisdiction over both private and public entities operating within the State of California, including corporate entities, private

sector contracts granted by the State of California, and all State departments and local governments.

(Taken from: <http://www.dfeh.ca.gov/about.asp>)

Due to confidentiality rules, once a case is given over to DFEH, the Human Relations Commission of Riverside can monitor the case ONLY if one or both parties agree to share information with the commission as to the status of their case. Once DFEH accepts a case, an investigation process takes place that may result in an administrative hearing or lawsuit**

**** If emotional distress damages or administrative fines are sought in a DFEH accusation, the Respondent may elect to have the case litigated in civil court.**

What types of cases would be referred to DFEH?

Examples of cases handled by DFEH include:

- Discrimination in employment, housing, and accommodations because of
 - Race
 - Ancestry
 - National origin
 - Color
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Religion
 - Disability
 - Marital status
 - Age (40 and over)
 - Medical condition
 - Refusal of family care leave
 - Refusal of leave due to serious health condition

- Denial of pregnancy disability leave
- Retaliation for reporting patient abuse in tax supported institutions

- Accommodation examples include:
 - Hotels/motels
 - Non-Profit Organizations
 - Restaurants
 - Theaters
 - Hospitals
 - Barber and beauty shops
 - Housing accommodations
 - Local government and public agencies
 - Schools
 - Retail establishments

- Cases involving hate violence

If you or someone you know has been discriminated against due to any of the above-mentioned reasons, please contact our executive staff at (951) 826-5709/(951) 826-5302 or you may visit us on the web at www.riversideca.gov/hrc. We are here to help and offer guidance in bringing resolution to your case.

EASTSIDE YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Eastside Youth Advisory Council was adopted by City Council on August 13, 2002.

The purpose of the Eastside Youth Advisory Council is:

- (a) to advise the Human Relations Commission on:
 - (i) matters of concern to young persons in the Eastside; and
 - (ii) policy and programs concerning young persons in the Eastside; and

- (b) to provide a channel of communication between the Eastside community and the Human Relations Commission in relation to matters concerning Eastside young persons.

PART 1 – ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL

Establishment of Council:

The Human Relations Commission was delegated by the City Council, as indicated in the Eastside Strategic Plan, to establish an Eastside Youth Advisory Council supported jointly by the Human Relations Commission and the Youth Action Office, for a period of one-year period beginning March 1, 2003, to strategize on issues in the Eastside.

Membership of Council:

- (1) The Council is constituted by not less than 7 members.

- (2) A person between the ages of 14 and 20 may apply to the Office of Human Relations or the Youth Action Office to be appointed as a member of the Council.

- (3) An application shall be submitted on a form approved by the Human Relations Commission.

- (4) Council members must reside in the Eastside as defined by the City of Riverside Office of Neighborhood boundaries.
- (5) In appointing a member to council the Human Relations Commission shall consider the culture and demographic composition of the Eastside.

PART 2 – FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

- (1) The Functions of the Council are, related to matters of young persons of the Eastside;
 - (a) The Council will-encourage dialogue with young persons, community groups, and the Human Relations Commission on issues and policies affecting the youth of the Eastside;
 - (b) The Council may conduct forums, approved by the Human Relations Commission; and
 - (c) The Council may to recommend for consideration make recommendations of the Eastside to the Human Relations Commission on planning, development, integration and implementation of policies and programs affecting young people of the Eastside.
- (2) The Council may perform any other functions delegated or approved by the Human Relations Commission.
- (3) The council may establish and conduct functions through subcommittees approved by the Human Relations Commission.

Additional Programs and Community Partnerships

In addition to the programs already highlighted, the HRC is continually engaged in identifying and sponsoring other local programs whose organizational mission and vision is similar to those of the commission.

For the fiscal year 2003/2004, the HRC offered sponsorship to the following organizations:

- **Volunteer Center of Riverside County** - The HRC supports the Volunteer Center of Riverside County with funding of \$30,000. This funding is used to support two programs of the Volunteer Center. Inform Riverside and HELPLine.

Inform Riverside links people in need of human or social services with the resources available in the City of Riverside. Inform Riverside receives over 7,000 calls from Riverside citizens each year. The service may be accessed by phone, internet or the printed directory. When callers need social services like food, shelter, day care, etc. Help is only a phone call away with Inform Riverside: 1-800-464-1123.

HELPLine is a 24-hour/7 day a week Crisis Hotline. The HELPLine is a free confidential service answered by trained counselors. Bilingual counselors are also available. When you dial the HELPLine at 951-686-HELP, you are put in touch with someone who cares. Over 8,000 crisis calls are received each year.

- **Youth Service Center** – The Youth Service Center was established in 1969 by a community task force. This organization seeks to improve the quality of life in our community by enhancing the capabilities of young people and strengthening families. The HRC gave \$30,000 to help support this local effort.

- **Black History Month Committee of Riverside** – This organization provides meaningful cultural activities for the residents of Riverside such as the Black History Month Parade now in its 25th year. Past themes include; “Living the Dream”; “Family, Church, Community-We Are One”; “Stronger Unity for a Greater Community”. Last year the HRC contributed \$5,000 to support this organization and its educational efforts to help enhance our knowledge of present and past achievements of African-Americans.
- **Cinco de Mayo Fiestas** – The HRC is also proud to support local cultural celebrations such as Cinco de Mayo events. Last year the commission gave over \$11,000 to various local groups to celebrate and recognize the rich cultural history of our Mexican residents.



2003/2004 ANNUAL BUDGET

The Human Relations Commission is staffed by the Office of Human Relations. The Office of Human Relations is a division under the City Manager's Office. For accounting purposes the budgets for the commission and the executive office are combined. For 2003/2004, the combined budget was \$298,480. A detailed summary appears below.

Office Personnel Services

Salary/benefits	\$182,133
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Non-personnel Expenses

General office expenses	\$8,818
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Special Projects

Support for local community organizations	\$70,000
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Human Relations Commission

Outreach and educational activities	
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Supplies, printing, sponsorships, workshops	\$17,000
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Other charges/central service allocation	\$20,529
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TOTAL - \$298,480

AWARDS

- ***Sponsor Appreciation Award.*** January 31, 2004. Presented for sponsorship support for the 'Celebrating 25 Years' awards banquet by **Black History Month Committee.**
- ***Appreciation Award.*** June 22, 2004. Presented for the valuable contributions made to support the 'Holla Back 2004' event by **The City Of Riverside Eastside Youth Advisory Council.**
- ***Site of Promise Award.*** January, 2004. Presented in recognition of efforts to fulfill the Five Promises to young people by **America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth.**
- ***The Sapphire Award.*** December, 2003. Presented for community responsibility by **The Black Women's Leadership Forum.**

STANDING RULES OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION CITY OF RIVERSIDE

Mission

To advocate for equal opportunity, justice, and access in the City of Riverside to services and opportunities including, but not limited to, governmental services, employment opportunity, education, housing, and public accommodations. To foster mutual understanding and respect between people, to encourage education and outreach, and develop and promote programs, which work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination.

A. Objectives:

1. Equal justice and access before the law.
2. Equal socio-economic and political opportunity.
3. A caring, trusting, and non-biased community with individual dignity and integrity for all.
4. Protection of the dignity and integrity of every individual.
5. Responsible citizenship.
6. Effective consideration of complaints and redress of grievances.
7. Equitable opportunities in health, housing, education and employment.
8. Education of all in the community relating to basic human rights and responsibilities.

9. Protection for all in the City of Riverside from the discrimination and injustice caused by discrimination based of race, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and national origin.

B. Powers, Duties, and Functions

MC Section 2.16.030

The powers, duties and functions of the Human Relations Commission shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. To advise the City Council on all problems of local inter-group relations;
2. To study the problems of prejudice and discrimination in the community and the causes thereof;
3. To work with other agencies, public and private in developing programs to eliminate prejudice and discrimination;
4. To sponsor and encourage educational activities which tend to promote inter-racial, inter-faith, and inter-ethnic harmony, progress, and integration;
5. To foster mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious, and national groups;
6. To prepare and submit an annual report to the City Council concerning human relations by the end of the fiscal year;
7. To recommend and coordinate effective systems to ensure equal justice and access for The City of Riverside.

C. Number of members – Qualifications:

MC Section 2.16.020

1. The Commission shall consist of not less than fifteen members appointed with the City Charter. So far as is reasonably possible, the Commission members shall include representation from the following fields: education, medicine, health and welfare, law, real estate, industry, business, finance, law enforcement and labor.

Further, the diversity of the Commission is important to achieving its stated objectives. In that regard, there should be

focused outreach activities to expand the pool of applicants for appointment to the Commission.

D. Appointment; terms

Charter Section 802

1. The members of each board or commission shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor and city council and shall be nominated and appointed by the mayor and city council from the qualified electors of the city, none of whom shall hold any paid office or employment in the city government. They shall be subject to removal by the mayor and city council by a motion adopted by five affirmative votes with the mayor entitled to vote. The members thereof shall serve for a term of four years and until their respective successors are appointed and qualified, and may serve for not more than two consecutive full terms.
2. The Human Relations Commission may recommend removal of a member of the Commission to the City Council.
3. There shall be two ex-officio student members. One shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Riverside Unified School District, and one shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Alvord Unified School District. These ex-officio members shall serve on the Commission for no more than one academic year. The City Council shall approve the appointment of these ex-officio members.

E. Resignations:

Any commissioner may resign from the commission by submitting a written resignation to the Mayor and City Council as well as to the Commission Chair.

F. Compensation; vacancies.

Charter Section 805

The members of Boards and Commissions shall serve without compensation for their service as such, but may receive reimbursement for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred on official duty when such expenditures have received authorization by the City Council.

Any vacancies in any board or commission, from whatever cause arising, shall be filled by the mayor and city council with the mayor entitled to vote on any such appointment. Upon vacancy occurring leaving an unexpired portion of a term, any appointment to fill such a vacancy shall be for the unexpired portion of such term. If a member of a board or commission absents himself/herself from three consecutive regular meetings of such board or commission, unless by permission of such board or commission expressed in its official minutes, or is convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, or ceases to be a qualified elector of the city, the office shall become vacant and shall be so declared by the city council. If a position on an enumerated board or commission has remained vacant for sixty days, the mayor shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy in accordance with Section 803.

G. Officers

1. The officers of this Commission shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Parliamentarian. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Standing rules and by the parliamentary authority of this Commission, which shall be Robert's Rules of Order.
2. No Chair or Vice-Chair shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
3. The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Parliamentarian shall be elected by members of the Commission, to serve for one year or until their successors are appointed. Their term of office shall begin immediately upon election. Election of officers shall take place at the March regular meeting of the Commission.

4. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, or Parliamentarian shall succeed immediately to the office for the remainder of the Chair's un-expired term.
5. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the Vice-Chair, or Parliamentarian, the Office shall be filled by election from the Commission.
6. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the meeting will be called to order by the Parliamentarian who shall then serve as Chair pro-tem and shall terminate his/her office at the end of the meeting.
7. Except as may be otherwise provided in this charter, the City Manager shall designate staff to support Commission and activities thereof.

H. Meetings:

1. Each Board or Commission shall hold regular meetings at least once each month and such special meetings as such Board or Commission may require. All proceedings shall be open to the public.
2. Unless otherwise ordered by the Commission regular meetings shall be held on the third Thursday of each month.
3. A special meeting may be called by the Chair or any five members of the Commission. Notice of a special meeting stating the time, place, and purpose shall be served in writing upon each member not less than five days before such meeting and/or by telephone or email within forty-eight hours of the meeting time.
4. A quorum shall be a majority of the members of the Commission. If a quorum is not present for two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, a special meeting may be called as in "3" above and a majority of those members attending the special meeting may establish a new quorum.

I. Meeting Attendance:

1. Commissioners are expected to attend 75% of noticed Commission, Executive and Standing Committee meetings/activities. The Commission shall review all absences at the regularly scheduled meeting and determine which absences will be excused. If a Commissioner exceeds 25% unexcused absenteeism, the Commission may ask the City Council to remove the Commissioner.
2. An approved leave of absence will be granted for a period of two to six months for the following reasons:
 - a. Family Crisis
 - b. Business
 - c. Personal Illness
 - d. Education
3. Committee attendance policies will be monitored by the full Commission.

J. Appropriations:

Charter Section 801

The City Council shall include in its' annual budget such appropriation of funds as in its opinion shall be sufficient for the efficient and proper functioning of boards and commissions.

K. Committees:

1. Each commissioner shall be a participating member of at least one standing committee, project committee or task force.
2. It shall be the duty of the Chair to appoint the following standing or special committees or task forces.
3. Executive Committee shall consist of Officers and standing committee chairs and vice chairs, and immediate past chair.
4. Standing Committees
 - a. Governmental Affairs
 - b. Outreach/Education
5. Committee meetings maybe held as needed at the time and place designated by the committee.

6. Such other committees/task forces, standing or special, shall be appointed by the Commission Chair as he/she shall from time to time, deem necessary to carry on the work of the Commission.
7. Committees are advisory to the Commission. They do not have the authority to act on behalf of the Commission except in the case of a specific delegation of authority adopted at a regular Commission meeting. Business applicable to a certain committee shall automatically be referred to it.
8. Commissioners are required to participate in mandatory in-service training at least once per year.

L. Parliamentary Authority:

The rules contained in the newly revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this Commission in all cases to which they are applicable, unless they are not consistent with these standing rules or any special rules of order the Commission may adopt, or any rules as set forth in the City Municipal Code as amended, or in any city ordinance as amended. The Parliamentarian shall make all necessary rulings.

M. Amendment of Standing Rules:

These standing rules can be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by two-thirds vote of those present, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting and has been given to the Governmental Affairs Committee Chair for review.

Revised April 17, 2003