

Message From The President/CEO

On November 5, 2018, I arrived at The Fair Housing Center, ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work. What an amazing and transformative fifteen months it has been! In some ways, it still feels like I just got here, but in many ways, I feel as if I've lived here forever. Toledo is a great town, and it's so good to be back in the Midwest. Truly, life is good!

We have been busy here at The Fair Housing Center, working hard to end housing discrimination in Lucas County and beyond. From providing fair housing training to the community, to investigating cases of housing discrimination, to advocating for policies that benefit the most vulnerable among us, our work is as diverse as the people we serve.

The Fair Housing Center recently completed a draft of the City of Toledo's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), an in-depth study of the history, laws, administrative policies, and other local conditions here in Toledo that impact the location, availability, and accessibility of housing for protected groups. Housing is much more than shelter; it is the foundation upon which we build our lives. The AI study is a springboard to the creation of a Fair Housing Action Plan which will detail the ways in which we can all work together to make Toledo the best it can be for all of its residents. The AI study is available on the City's website for review and public comment. We encourage you to read it and share your comments with us. The AI can be found [here](#). Please submit questions or comments to Sarah Jenkins, Director of Public Policy and Community Engagement, at sarahjenkins@toledofhc.org.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we are hiring a Mediator for our newly-established Landlord-Tenant Mediation Department. The Mediator will provide legal information to tenants, landlords, property managers, and others involved in the rental process. The Mediator will assist the parties to resolve disputes at the pre-litigation stage, helping to prevent unnecessary evictions and fostering mutually beneficial landlord-tenant relationships. We will also provide training on housing rights and responsibilities to landlords, tenants, and other community stakeholders. We are grateful for the funding provided by Lucas County and the Toledo Community Foundation which helped make this program a reality. [Apply here for the Mediator position](#).

Peace,



Marie Flannery
TFHC President & CEO

Housing Rights Community Advocates Training

Friday, March 6 • 10 a.m.-noon

Mott Branch Library 1010 Dorr St., Toledo, OH 43607

This informative training is perfect for service providers, case workers, and advocates to gain a better understanding of the housing rights and responsibilities that affect the communities they serve and learn about resources that can help.

IN THE NEWS!

Our work has been featured in the news:

[Council committee holds final talks on new Toledo water bill assistance program](#)

[Toledo leaders pledge to work on water affordability, monthly billing](#)

[Toledo woman speaks about landlord's sexual harassment after justice department files case](#)

[Justice Dept. accuses Toledo landlord of sexually harassing female tenants](#)

[Leading Edge with Jerry Anderson](#)

Host Jerry Anderson and TFHC CEO Marie Flannery discuss the Fair Housing Act on *Leading Edge*.





JUSTICE for The PEOPLE

- **Access to rental housing**

The complainant, an African American woman, contacted The Fair Housing Center after applying at the same apartment complex on three separate occasions. Each time she applied, she was denied for a different reason, including for criminal history, negative rental history, and for past due accounts. She was worried that she would be stuck renting substandard housing or in the same predominantly minority neighborhoods. We first tried to help her appeal the denial, but that was unsuccessful. We then helped her file a complaint with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. Through mediation with OCRC, we were able to negotiate a settlement where she was accepted and placed on the waitlist at the apartment complex. She just wanted to be able to move somewhere nice that is accessible and affordable to her.

- **Fighting for accessibility**

A condominium's rules and regulations prohibited residents from using an elevator during certain hours, and residents couldn't use the elevator at all at night. This policy was dangerous for persons with disabilities as it effectively stopped them from accessing the home or leaving. The association also prohibited dogs and limited animals to only one cat. This discouraged any potential residents with disabilities who may need assistance animals. The condo board was contacted, and corrections were made to the condo rules. An addendum was added that use of the elevator during restricted hours may be allowed with board approval. Additionally, all pet rules only address noise and pet waste issues.



- **Avoiding eviction for a person with disabilities**

A complainant with a disability contacted The Fair Housing Center because she was being evicted. After talking with the complainant, The Fair Housing Center found that the reason for her eviction was due to challenges she faces because of her disability. The complainant's father used to live with the complainant and take care of her, made sure she took her medication, etc. When the complainant's father passed away, the complainant was not compliant with her medications and after experiencing some bullying from other residents, the complainant made some threats towards residents. The complainant was served with a notice to vacate and then an eviction notice. The Fair Housing Center stepped in to help. A reasonable accommodation was submitted to the manager for the complainant to stay while she made arrangements to move if the complainant took appropriate steps to prevent the threats from happening again. The complainant was able to vacate in a reasonable amount of time and the management company agreed that if the complainant wanted to move back into the apartment complex once she found some additional assistance, the eviction on the complainant's record would not be an obstacle from moving back into the apartment complex.

- **Designated parking spaces**

The complainant contacted The Fair Housing Center for assistance with a reasonable accommodation for a designated handicap accessible parking space. She had already made the request to management, and they put in additional accessible parking by her unit but did not designate it for her. When she contacted them again, they planned to put additional handicap spaces, but stated they could not designate a space for her use only. The Fair Housing Center contacted the manager to discuss this with her. The manager was concerned that if she designated the space with our client's unit number, it would jeopardize her safety, by alerting others to the fact that she is not home when the space is empty. We discussed that the apartment managers can designate the space in a number of ways, and the manager decided she would order a sign with our client's BMV placard number on it, to designate the space for her use only. We were able to quickly resolve this issue with a phone call and conversation to educate management.

Save the Date!



the
FAIR HOUSING
center

There's
No Place
like
HOME



and Join Us for the

Red Shoe Event!

THURSDAY
8.13.20

5-8 PM

The Pinnacle
1772 Indian Wood Circle
Maumee, OH

CALL FOR ENTRIES!

**YOUR ZIP CODE IS MORE
THAN AN ADDRESS,
IT'S AN IDENTITY.**

SEND US A POEM INSPIRED BY YOUR ZIP CODE.

5TH
ANNUAL

ODE to the ZIP CODE



**Submit your entries
February 12 - 28
at**

toledocitypaper.com/online/ottzc-2020-submit

**Poems must be 5 lines each,
with the number of words in each line
determined by the corresponding digit
in your ZIP Code.**

Live reading & prizes awarded
Sunday, April 19, 2020

CASH PRIZES!

Winners selected from three categories:
youth, young adult, and adult

**Finalists published in *Toledo City Paper*
and *Toledo Area Parent*!**

Last year's winning youth poem:

- 4 No "darkest hour" comes
- 3 Where light's everlasting,
- 6 An electric city in candlelight glows
- 1 Brilliantly.
- 4 Only people grow weary.

– Mia Westfere



THE ARTS COMMISSION
INSPIRING A VIBRANT TOLEDO

Hosted by:

Toledo **AREA PARENT**
News



**TOLEDO
LUCAS COUNTY
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**



TFHC Joins National Groups Opposing Changes to the Disparate Impact Rule

The Fair Housing Center joined a diverse coalition of civil rights groups in a campaign to “Defend Civil Rights”. The campaign mobilized thousands of people across the country to oppose a rule proposed by HUD that would roll back a key fair housing enforcement tool.

We believe that if this rule is finalized, it would be virtually impossible to challenge covert discriminatory practices by financial institutions, insurance companies, and housing providers and would open the floodgates for widespread discrimination against millions of people. This would particularly affect communities of color, families with children, women, LGBTQ individuals, people of faith, and people with disabilities.

The Fair Housing Center submitted a letter to HUD and aided community members in speaking out in opposition to the rule. The comment period closed with over 45,000 individual comments. Thank you to all who participated!

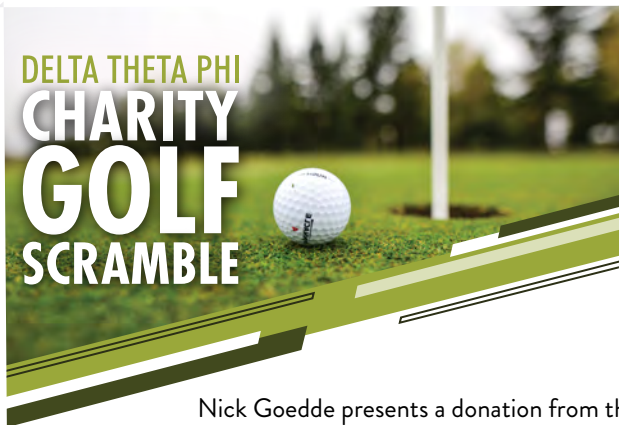
Take the WIMBY Pledge!

Help foster more diverse, inclusive communities by joining the Welcome In My Backyard (WIMBY) campaign! WIMBY Ohio is a timely and powerful response to the “Not In My Backyard” sentiment that leads to discrimination, harassment, and intolerance.

It's easy to participate!

Visit wimbyohio.org to take the pledge today, or contact The Fair Housing Center at 419-243-6163 to pick up free WIMBY signs. Display a yard sign or window decal, and share on social media.





Nick Goedde presents a donation from the Delta Theta Phi Charity Golf Scramble to TFHC CEO Marie Flannery.



Everyone had a great time – so much so we are chosen to be beneficiaries again this year!



419-243-6163
toledofhc.org

"My landlord said there was only one way I could avoid a rent increase."

Landlords who make unwelcome sexual advances, or who demand sexual favors in exchange for honoring lease terms, are breaking the law. Contact us to report sexual harassment.

*“True peace
is not merely the absence
of tension; it is the presence of justice.”*

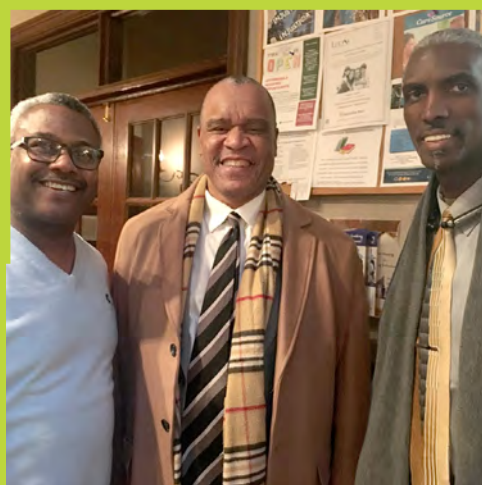
– Martin Luther King, Jr.

We are Fair Housing

Partnering with Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity



**The community helped
us celebrate our
accomplishments at our
Annual Meeting**



Welcome George!

We are delighted to announce that George Thomas has Joined The Fair Housing Center as Vice President and General Counsel. George Thomas has worked as an attorney focused on housing law and fair housing issues for more than a decade. After graduating law school, he worked as an AmeriCorps Homelessness Prevention attorney for Legal Aid of Western Ohio. George worked as Senior Attorney within ABLE's Housing and Economic Development practice group supervising the work of several attorneys in the Toledo area. Please join us in welcoming George to our Fair Housing Family.

Marie M. Flannery
President & CEO

Officers

Alan Sattler Chairperson
Patty Wise Vice Chairperson
Cheryl Slack Secretary

Directors

Denise Alvarado
Alan Bannister
Juanita Greene
Keith Jordan
Carla Nowak
Cherie Sears
Ernest Walker, Jr.
Mary-Thom Williams
Ray Wood

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toledofhc.org



VISION

The Fair Housing Center will be a leading visible force in preventing and correcting discriminatory practices.

MISSION

The Fair Housing Center is a non-profit civil rights agency dedicated to the elimination of housing discrimination, the promotion of housing choice and the creation of inclusive communities of opportunity. To achieve our mission, the Center engages in education and outreach, housing counseling, advocacy for anti-discriminatory housing policies, research and investigation and enforcement actions.

The Fair Housing Center (Toledo Fair Housing Center) is a GuideStar Platinum Participant



EXCELLENT RATING

11 Years



2014 Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics Winner
Northwestern Ohio • Better Business Bureau®

Trust • Performance • Integrity

Support Fairness & Equality Every Time You Shop!

amazonsmile

You shop, Amazon gives.

- Visit smile.amazon.com – It is the same Amazon you know. Same Products, Same Prices, Same Service.
- When purchasing items, please indicate Fair Housing Opportunities of Northwest Ohio, Inc. as your charitable organization of choice.
- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase to The Fair Housing Center



Enroll Your Kroger Card

With the Kroger Community Rewards program, you can help support the efforts of The Fair Housing Center every time you buy groceries at Kroger. Enrollment is simple and free!

- Visit **kroger.com**
- Sign in or create an account
- On the Community tab, select Kroger Community Rewards
- Click Enroll Now, then Enroll
- Search by group number **97582** or the name **Fair Housing Opportunities of Northwest Ohio, Inc.**
- Click Enroll