

## Meet Marie!

### The Fair Housing Center's New CEO



**W**e're excited to introduce you to our new President and CEO Marie Flannery! Although Marie joins us from California where she recently served as President and CEO of Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board, she considers herself a Midwesterner at heart since she spent most of her adult life in Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Marie spent her first day on the job joining us for a staff potluck, and as we all got to know each other it became clear she's going to fit right in with our small but mighty team! Many of you will get the opportunity to meet Marie at our Open House on January 24, but now is your chance to learn a little more about this remarkable civil rights advocate who is sharing her talents with our community.

#### **What made you interested in civil rights?**

I was born the year Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech, which was also the year that President Kennedy was assassinated. I think that the concepts of equality and fairness have been a part of me since my earliest days.

#### **Marie's Favorite Quote**

"I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars." – E.M. Forster

#### **Who is your favorite social movement leader from the past or present? Why?**

I admire everyone who has worked to eliminate discrimination and promote equal rights for all. In recent years, President Barack Obama has become a hero of mine for his eloquence, grace, and heartfelt attempts to bring this country together.

#### **What inspires you?**

The creative process. Whether it's painting, quilting, or writing, the ability to lose myself in the creative process always inspires me. There is something wonderful about freeing your mind while you play with color or words that allows new ideas and possibilities to surface.

#### **If you could trade places with another person for a week, famous or not, dead or alive, real or fictional, who would it be?**

My favorite author, Stephen King, because I'd love to know what goes on in that mind of his!

#### **How do you think The Fair Housing Center impacts our community?**

When both the letter and the spirit of the Fair Housing Act are followed, equal housing opportunity becomes a reality, resulting in the creation of strong neighborhoods, vibrant with diversity. The work we do at The Fair Housing Center helps people access housing of their choice. Communities thrive when all are welcome.

#### **What does fair housing mean to you?**

It means that everyone has an equal shot at success.

#### **Name one thing you think people would be surprised to know about The Fair Housing Center.**

The need for our services is as great now as it was when the agency was founded in 1975, and the fight for fair housing continues.

#### **What is your favorite thing about our community?**

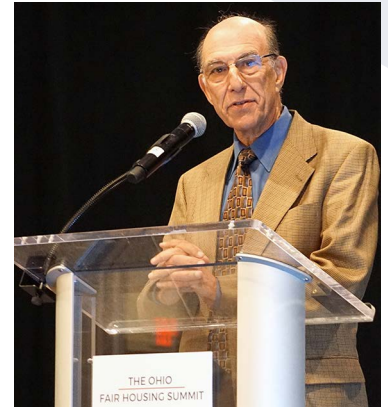
I love how welcoming the community has been since I joined The Fair Housing Center!

# OHIO FAIR HOUSING SUMMIT

In partnership with the Ohio Diversity Council, The Fair Housing Center hosted a state-wide summit to commemorate the 50th anniversary of The Fair Housing Act. Drawing stakeholders and leaders from across Ohio, the event provided a special opportunity to examine the persistent barriers to equal opportunity and share solutions for creating more diverse, vibrant communities.

The all-day summit featured keynote speaker Richard Rothstein, author of *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America*. His presentation explained how segregated neighborhoods and racial disparities did not happen by accident, but are the result of deliberate government policies that continue to have a detrimental impact decades later and must be proactively addressed in order to create more equitable living conditions.

Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, Professor & Founder/CEO of Do Good Work Educational Consulting LLC, delivered a powerful presentation exploring how belonging is a key component to success, and the role fair housing plays in creating that sense of belonging.



Keynote Speaker Richard Rothstein,  
Author of *The Color of Law*



**Changes and Challenges – The Current State of Fair Housing Panel:**  
Jeniece Jones, Carrie Pleasants, Darlene Sweeney-Newbern, and Vincent Curry

Keynote Speaker Dr.  
Terrell Strayhorn, Professor  
& Founder/CEO of Do  
Good Work Educational  
Consulting LLC



**Law & Order – Fair Housing Policy in Action Panel:** Diane Citrino, Michelle Heyer, Stephen Dane, and Patricia Wise



**Another 50 Years – The Future of Fair Housing Panel:** Katy Crosby, George Thomas, Lisa Rice, and Ralph Smithers

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Diana Patton, Speaker, Social Justice and Integrative Health Advocacy Coach, Author & Attorney

The Ohio Fair Housing Summit concluded with the launch of a state-wide initiative called Welcome In My Backyard, or WIMBY, a grassroots movement to foster more welcoming communities by drawing attention to the growing number of individuals who believe in diversity and inclusion. Ongoing in other communities, the launch of WIMBY Ohio is a timely and powerful response to the “Not in My Backyard” sentiment that leads to discrimination, harassment, and intolerance.

Attendees of the Summit were encouraged to help spread the WIMBY message across the state.

**Want to join the movement? Visit [wimbyohio.org](http://wimbyohio.org) and show your support today!**

**Tell Your Friends – follow WIMBY Ohio on Facebook and Twitter, and use #wimbyohio**



Take the Pledge



Display the Logo



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# Highlighting a Year of Impact

**T**he Fair Housing Center celebrated a year of accomplishments at its Annual Meeting on October 10.

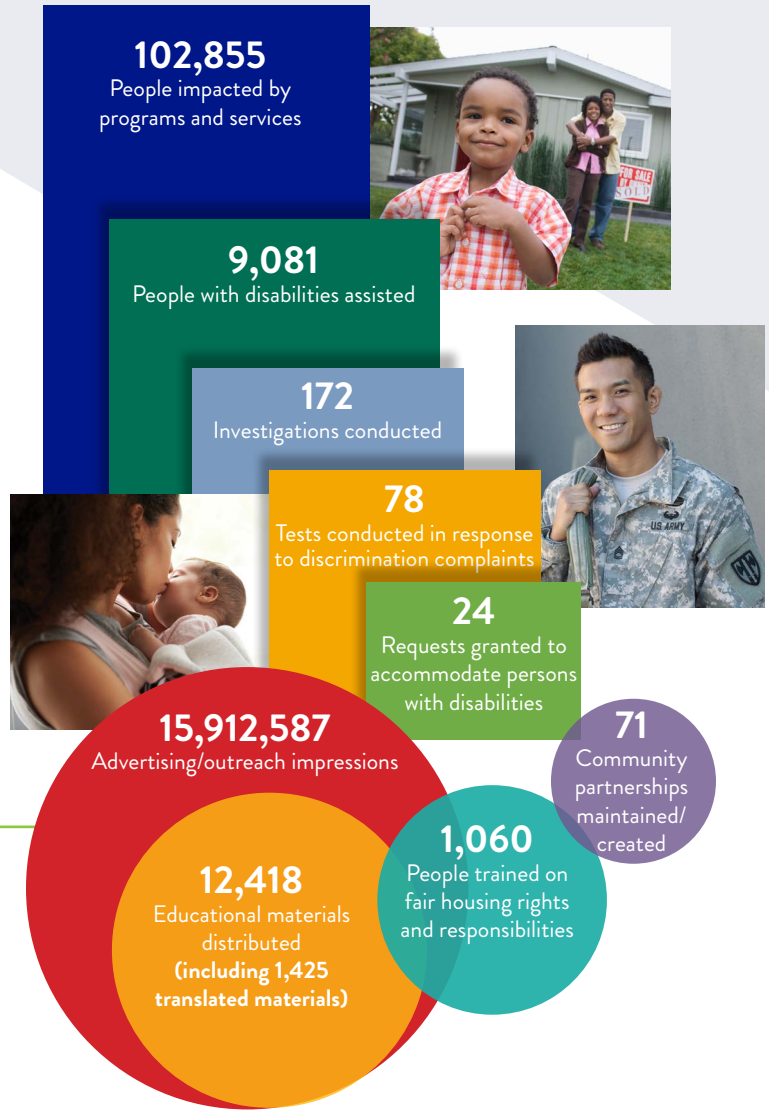
Board Chair Alan Sattler outlined strategic goals for 2019 and announced the selection of Marie Flannery as the new President and CEO. Staff members were recognized for their years of service: Karen Plocek and Linda Skowronek for 20 years and Mike Fehlen for five years.



TFHC staff, board, and volunteers had a chance to help work on the sculpture, including Board Chair Alan Sattler



Artist Dane Turpening with the finished "Keys to Opportunity" sculpture



## Keys to Opportunity Unveiled

**F**ollowing this year's Annual Meeting, the community was invited to witness the unveiling of "Keys to Opportunity," a new public sculpture constructed from thousands of keys donated by the community. This past spring, The Fair Housing Center hosted a Community Key Collection, gathering nearly 20,000 old keys that were fused together by artist Dane Turpening to create the new artwork. The unique sculpture represents the role fair housing plays in opening the door to the vital resources that enable us to thrive.



The Fair Housing Center collected nearly 20,000 keys



# HOA Bylaws Can't Discriminate Against Families with Children

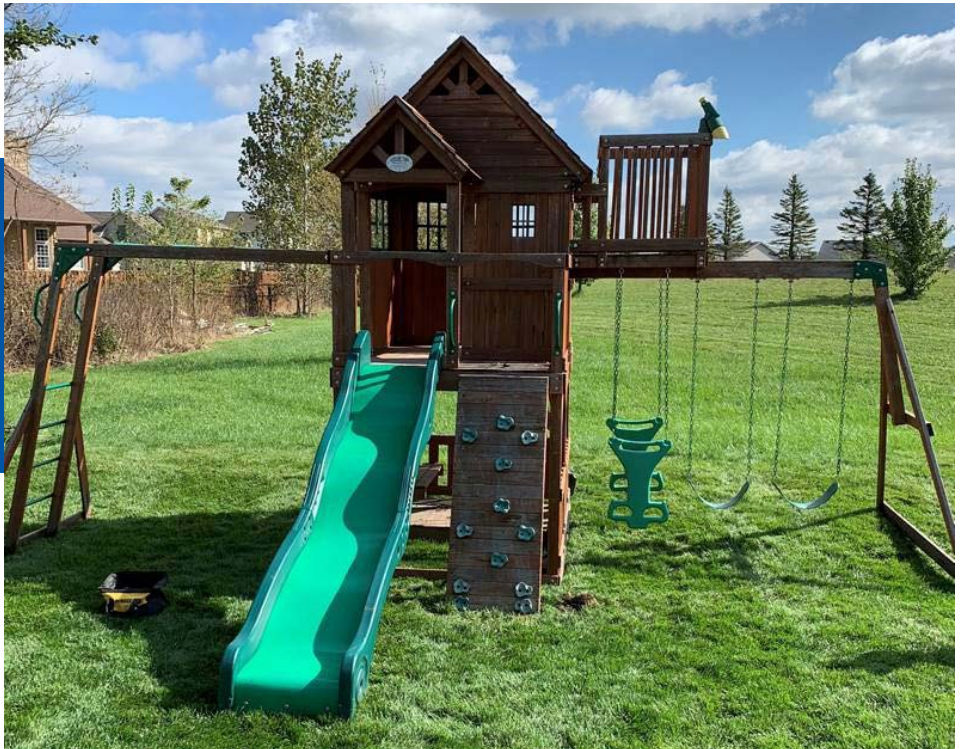
Steve Holland and Brian Spears are neighbors who live with their families in a suburban development. When they were told by their HOA that swing sets were not allowed, they turned to The Fair Housing Center to defend their rights.

The HOA bylaws restricted residents from putting up play sets, affecting several families in the neighborhood. When Steve and Brian were not able to reach a resolution by talking to their HOA board, they reluctantly contacted The Fair Housing Center, not realizing that family status is a protected class under federal fair housing laws.

With our help, the HOA bylaws were amended to allow children's play equipment, creating a more welcoming space for all families in the neighborhood.

"When this happened, I had an understanding of what people go through when they are discriminated against. Finding out I am a protected class, I know what people go through on a daily basis whereas I was going through it for the first time in my life. It was really eye opening and now I understand why these laws were put in place," shared Brian Spears.

"I'm very confident that this will serve future generations within our neighborhood very well, and when it comes time to sell our home it will command a good fair price at market value," stated Steve Holland.



Marie M. Flannery  
President & CEO

#### Officers

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Patty Wise ..... Vice Chairperson  
Kellie Schlachter ..... Treasurer  
Cheryl Slack ..... Secretary

#### Directors

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Alan Bannister  
Diane Friedman  
Keith Jordan  
Cherie Sears  
Ernest Walker, Jr.  
Mary-Thom Williams

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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.

**WINTER  
OPEN HOUSE**



**Thursday, January 24, 2019  
4 – 7 p.m.**

The Fair Housing Center  
432 N. Superior St., Toledo, OH 43604

Join us to meet our new President  
and CEO Marie Flannery!  
Enjoy appetizers and find out what's in store  
for 2019

RSVP by Monday, January 21 at  
[tfhcopenhouse.eventbrite.com](http://tfhcopenhouse.eventbrite.com)



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