



Annual Report

FY2006

(July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006)



Art Contest Winner, Grade 5
Treva Mathis
Paul Lawrence Dunbar Academy
Toledo, OH

THE OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Honorable Bob Taft, Governor

Pastor Aaron Wheeler, Sr., Chairman
Jeanine P. Donaldson, Commissioner
Altagracia "Grace" Ramos, Commissioner
Nirmal K. Sinha, Commissioner
Charles Winburn, Commissioner

G. Michael Payton, Executive Director

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June 30, 2006

To the Honorable Ted Strickland, Members of the General Assembly and Citizens of Ohio:

On behalf of our Commissioners and the entire OCRC staff, I am pleased to present to you our 2006 Annual Report. This report reflects our accomplishments and the commitment of our entire staff to fulfill our mission in enforcing Ohio's laws of discrimination and in promoting diversity and understanding in our communities across the state.

In this fiscal year, the citizens of Ohio filed 5,702 charges of discrimination with our agency, a number that has grown steadily over the past few years. To provide the highest level of access to our services, we have improved our online charge filing system through our website. We will continue to review and improve our website so that it may be a valuable tool for our constituents and the public.

This year, we further enhanced our education and outreach efforts by introducing *Celebrating Diversity* and *Cultural Horizons* programs that feature a series of highly visible public events that highlight the contributions of the minority populations in Ohio and accompanying educational materials for grades 3 through 12.

I am pleased that this report highlights our continued partnerships with community organizations and other governmental agencies who share our vision for enforcement, education and outreach. These include federal, state and local governments, advocacy agencies and academic institutions. We continue to broaden our outreach base and increase our impact through working in conjunction with these organizations.

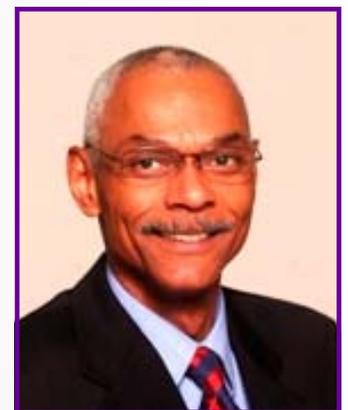
While we are proud of our accomplishments, we are also very aware that discrimination still exists in our state. We remain diligent in our endeavors. We thank you for your continued trust and support and I invite you to contact us with your questions and concerns.

Respectfully,



G. Michael Payton

*Executive Director
Ohio Civil Rights Commission*



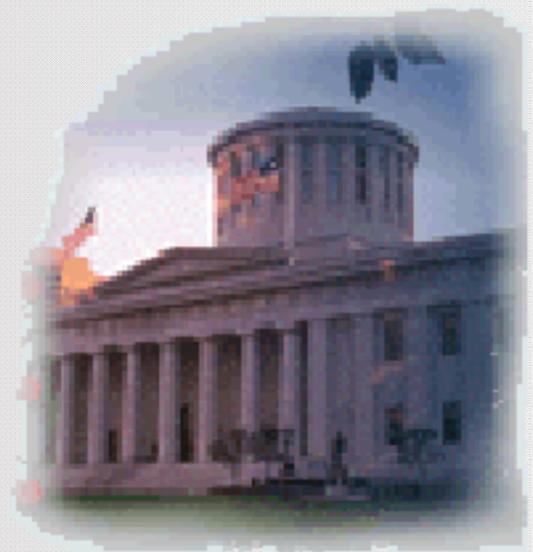
Legislative Mandate

The Ohio Civil Rights Commission was established in July 1959 by the Ohio Legislature to enforce state laws against discrimination as specified in Chapter 4112 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Commission receives and investigates charges of discrimination in employment, public accommodations, housing, credit and disability in higher education on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, ancestry or familial status. It has the authority to secure access to records, premises, documents, evidence or possible sources of evidence, and to record testimony or statements from individuals. The Commission is empowered to issue subpoenas, interrogatories and cease and desist orders, hold public hearings, collect monetary benefits, and has additional statutory authority to:

- self-initiate investigations of discriminatory practices;
- formulate policies to effectuate the purposes of Chapter 4112 of the Ohio Revised Code, and make recommendations to agencies and offices of the state or local subdivisions of government to effectuate such policies;
- make periodic surveys of the existence and effect of discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, ancestry or familial status on the enjoyment of civil rights by persons within the state;
- prepare a comprehensive educational program, in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Education, for the students of Ohio's public schools

and for all other residents of Ohio, that is designed to: eliminate prejudice on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, age, ancestry or familial status, further good will amongst those groups and emphasize the origin of prejudice against those groups and its harmful effects.

The Commission consists of a five-member board of Commissioners and approximately 140 employees. Commissioners are appointed to five-year terms by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. By law, no more than three Commissioners can be of the same political party. The Governor designates one of the Commissioners to serve as the Chairperson. The Commissioners are responsible for selecting the agency's Executive Director, who implements the policies and procedures of the Commission and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the agency. Commissioners serve as the final arbiter in the investigatory process and meet regularly to rule on recommendations from the Commission's six regional offices regarding charges of discrimination.



Commissioners



Pastor Aaron Wheeler, Sr.—Chairman (Columbus)

Appointed Commissioner September 2000. Appointed Commission Chairman February 2001 and reappointed July 2005. His current term expires July 2010.

Jeanine P. Donaldson (Lorain)

Appointed Commissioner October 2002. Her current term expires July 2007.



Altagracia "Grace" Ramos (Beavercreek)

Appointed Commissioner March 1991 and reappointed August 1994, July 1999 and July 2004. Her current term expires July 2009.

Nirmal K. Sinha (Worthington)

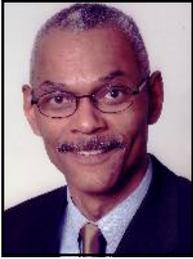
Appointed Commissioner April 1991 and reappointed July 1993, July 1998 and August 2003. His current term expires July 2008.



Charlie Winburn (Cincinnati)

Appointed Commissioner February 2001 and reappointed July 2001. His current term expires July 2006.

Executive Staff



G. MICHAEL PAYTON has been Executive Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission since July 2001. Mr. Payton oversees and directs 140 employees statewide in the agency's Central Office and six regional offices in Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo.

Mr. Payton previously served as Chief Legal Counsel and Director of Regional Operations for the Commission from 1997 to 2000. He served as Assistant Attorney General for the State of Ohio for 11 years from 1984 to 1995. During his tenure as an Assistant Attorney General, he served as Counsel to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and conducted administrative prosecutions. He served as Assistant Chief of the Attorney General's Transportation Section where he conducted litigation as a defense counsel in a variety of areas including employment law. Mr. Payton received a Bachelor of Arts from The Ohio State University and a Juris Doctorate in 1983 from the Georgetown University Law Center.



KEITH P. MCNEIL has been Regional Counsel and Director of Regional Operations since October 2001. Mr. McNeil has been with the OCRC since 1980 and served as Regional Director for the Akron office from 1994 through 2001. Other than a year's sabbatical to practice criminal and family law, his entire career has been devoted to the enforcement of Ohio's civil rights laws. Mr. McNeil is a member of both the State of Ohio and US District Court for the Northern District of Ohio Bar Associations. He attended the University of Akron where he received his Bachelor of Arts in 1978. He earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Akron in 1981.



MATTHEW D. MIKO currently serves as Chief Legal Counsel as well as the Director of Human Resources and Enforcement for the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. Mr. Miko served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Section of the Ohio Attorney General's Office from 1997 through 2001 and as an Assistant State Solicitor in the Ohio Attorney General's Office from 2000 through 2001. Mr. Miko received his Bachelor of Arts in 1994 and his Juris Doctorate in 1997, both from The Ohio State University.



CHRISTIA ALOU WHITE joined the Ohio Civil Rights Commission in early 2004 as the Director of Public Affairs. Mrs. White is a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C. where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism. She worked in the nation's capitol for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute as a media and public affairs specialist while obtaining her Juris Doctorate from the University of Maryland School of Law. Ms. White practiced labor and employment law before her most recent position with District of Columbia Mayor Anthony A. Williams' administration where she served as Interim Director to the Office on Latino Affairs before moving to Columbus.

Historic Timeline

1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor C. William O'Neil appointed Ohio's first official statewide Governor's Advisory Commission on Civil Rights. Charles Y. Lazarus serves as Chairman. • Governor's Advisory Commission on Civil Rights recommends that the State of Ohio establish a State Civil Rights Commission to address the problem of civil rights on a continuing basis.
1959	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Michael V. Disalle signed enabling legislation into law creating the Fair Employment Practices Commission for Ohio. • Law passed prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, and ancestry. First Executive Director, Frank Baldau.
1961	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Regional Office opened in Bellaire, Ohio. First Regional Director, Ellis L. Ross. • Name Changed to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination in public accommodations.
1965	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination in housing
1969	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing discrimination law amended and broadened • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination in burial lots
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination by reason of sex
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination in credit • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination by reason of disability • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination by reason of age
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OCRC and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) entered into a Worksharing Agreement, which provides dual filing for employment charges. Ohio has continually ranked near the top in the nation with one of the largest work sharing for successful case processing.
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law prohibiting discrimination by reason of age broadened
1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enactment of law prohibiting discrimination by institutions of higher education by reason of disability
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing discrimination law amended and broadened. • Commission given authority to award actual damages and allowing for punitive damages up to \$50,000.00 • Commission given authority to seek Temporary Restraining Orders

1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCRC and U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) entered into a Worksharing Agreement to eradicate housing discrimination.
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 28th marked the 30th Anniversary of the OCRC. Governor Richard F. Celeste and other state and local dignitaries recognized the OCRC for its continued commitment to protecting the rights of all Ohioans to enjoy the benefits of dignity and equality.
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age law amended to cover individuals 40 and over
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State law amended to bring it into conformity with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 Amended Substitute H.B. 321 brought Ohio's fair housing statute into conformity with federal fair housing legislation by adding "familial status" to the protected classes and a one year filing period for housing discrimination charges.
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a comprehensive curriculum guide and teaching aid for Ohio's schools entitled, "Valuing Diversity: Learning and Living Together." Revised in 1999.
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of the Alternative Dispute Resolution pilot program. During the first year of inception, over 53% of all cases that participated in the process were successfully mediated. Recognized in 1999 by HUD with a "Best Practices" award.
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law amended to substitute the term "disability" for the term "handicap" in the Ohio Civil Rights Commission Laws and certain other related laws July 29th marked the 40th Anniversary of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission The dedicated work of OCRC employees at the first "All Hands Meeting" was recognized.
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Workforce Redesign Initiative funded by grant from Ohio Department of Administrative Services and the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association to examine and redesign every process and system used by the agency in fulfilling its legislative mandate.
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 29th marked the 45th anniversary of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission.
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor Taft signed a bill making Ohio the first state to designate Dec. 1 Rosa Parks Day. House Minority Leader Joyce Beatty sponsored the bill.



Mission

We are the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, primary educator and enforcer of Ohio's Laws Against Discrimination.

We will be professional, competent and fair to our clients and all Ohio citizens as we educate the public and investigate claims of discrimination. It is our role to be a strong force in promoting positive human relations among our diverse population.

We value our employees for their skills, commitment and creativity. We will provide a work environment based on empowerment, mutual respect and honesty for all employees.

We will create a culture where continuous learning is valued and opportunities for training and professional growth are provided to all employees. We will incorporate technological innovations and processes in achieving our mission.

Core Values

Public Service. We are committed to serving and educating the public in a professional, impartial and efficient manner. Quality service will be accomplished by utilizing skilled and motivated employees who are responsive to our customers' needs.

Dedication. We will demonstrate our commitment to public service by being responsible, dependable and proactive professionals. We will maintain pride and excellence in fulfilling our mission.

Teamwork. We will empower our employees to achieve a quality work product and harmonious workplace through open communication, positive interaction and a spirit of cooperation.

Respect. We respect the diversity, talents and ideas of all OCRC employees, our most valued resources. We honor the right of every employee and the public to contribute, to be heard and to be treated with dignity.

Integrity. We pledge to fulfill our duties and responsibilities in a fair and impartial manner. We will be honest and trustworthy in our relationships with one another and with the public.

EEOC/HUD APPROPRIATIONS	EXPENDITURES
Salaries and Wages	2,217,849
Purchased Personal Services	178,092
Supplies and Materials	59,366
Motor Vehicle	36,636
Travel	40,253
Communications	57,284
Equipment Maintenance	39,197
Office Space	241,778
Printing	25,387
General Expenses	534,993
Equipment Maintenance	61,757
Encumbrances	101,573
Federal Appropriations	216,786
TOTAL EEOC/HUD APPROPRIATIONS	3,810,951

GENERAL REVENUE FUND (GRF)	EXPENDITURES
Salaries and Wages	6,953,791
Purchased Personal Services	9,454
Supplies and Materials	
Motor Vehicle	
Travel	
Communications	
Equipment Maintenance	
Office Space	289,704
Printing	
General Expenses	
Equipment	
Encumbrances	126
Federal Appropriation	
TOTAL GRF	7,253,075
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	11,064,026

Investigation & Enforcement

All persons who live or work in Ohio and believe that they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination can file a charge with one of OCRC's regional offices located in Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo. Such complaints must be filed within 180 days (or one year for housing complaints) of the alleged act of discrimination. The OCRC may also self-initiate an investigation based on preliminary information indicating the act may have been violated. In any event, OCRC must make a finding within one (1) year after a charge is filed.

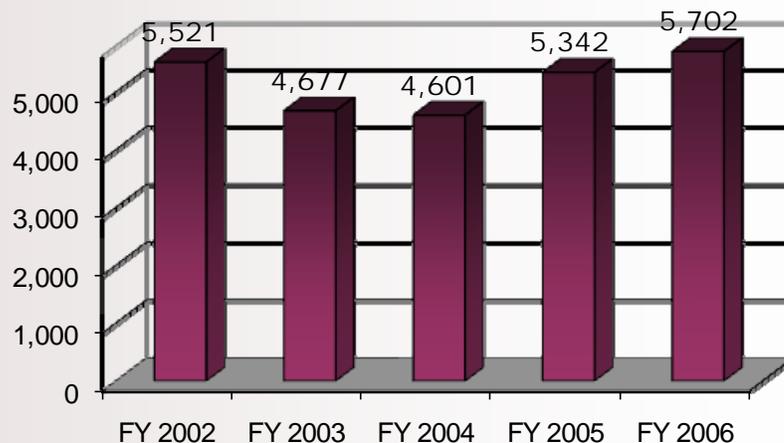
When a charge is filed, the responsibility for the investigation is assigned to a Civil Rights Field Representative (lead investigator). During the investigation, the Investigator will discuss the allegation in detail with Charging Party (the person or company responsible for the alleged act of discrimination). Before an investigation is conducted, each party is offered voluntary mediation. If both parties agree, an experienced OCRC mediator will schedule a mediation session within 30 days. During mediation both parties will have the opportunity to explain their position and offer ideas for reaching a resolution. The mediator will work with both parties to reach a mutually satisfactory settlement. Any agreement reached during mediation is binding upon the parties. If a mutually satisfactory settlement is reached, the case is closed. If a settlement is not reached, the mediator will return the case to the region for full investigation.

The lead Investigator works with a team consisting of a manager, a coordinator, legal counsel and other Investigators to guide the investigation and submit a written recommendation to the Commissioners who have the final authority on case decisions. If the facts obtained during the course of the investigation are insufficient to substantiate the charge of discrimination, the Commission will make a finding that it is **NOT PROBABLE** that a violation of law has occurred. The Commission will then dismiss the charge with a finding of **NO PROBABLE CAUSE**.

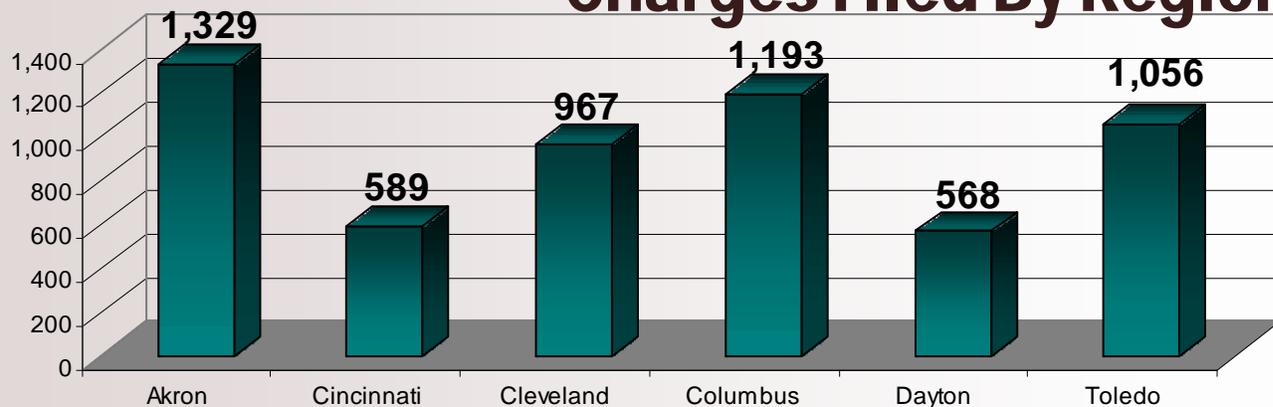
If the facts are sufficient to substantiate that discrimination has occurred, the Commission will make a finding that it is **PROBABLE** that a violation of law has occurred. This constitutes a **PROBABLE CAUSE** finding. If, following such finding, the OCRC is unable to resolve the charge using informal methods of conference, conciliation and persuasion, a formal complaint is issued and the case is scheduled for a public hearing before a neutral and detached Administrative Law Judge.

The Civil Rights Section of the Ohio Attorney General's Office represents the Commission in all matters of litigation.

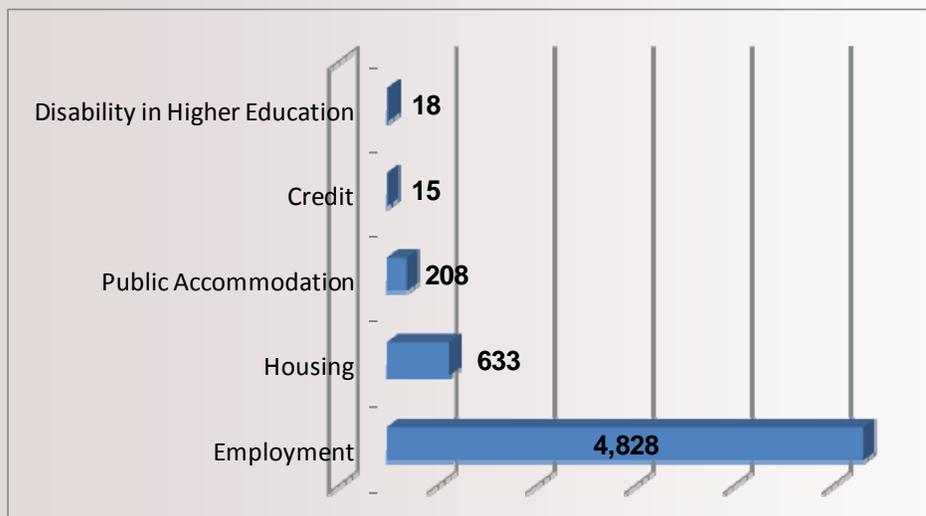
Charges Filed in Past Five Years



Charges Filed By Region



Types of Charges Filed (Closed Cases Only)



Alleged Issues of Charges Filed

Advertising	8
Assignment	2
Benefits	18
Benefits-Insurance	3
Constructive Discharge	249
Demotion	206
Discharge	2,356
Discipline	615
Exclusion	69
Harassment	952
Hiring	271
Housing Specific Issues	620
Intimidation	53
Job Classification	7
Layoff	174
Maternity	37
Other	119
Other Language/Accent Issue	1
Promotion	250
Qualifications	1
Reasonable Accommodation	428
Recall	18
References Unfavorable	2
Reinstatement	8
Retirement-Involuntary	10
Sexual Harassment	292
Suspension	180
Tenure	3
Terms/Conditions	816
Testing	1
Training	11
Union Representation	13
Wages	94

Closure by Resolution

Settlements	497
Withdrawal of Charge with Mediated Settlement	704
Successful Conciliation after a finding of Probable Cause	49
No Probable Cause	3177
Administrative Resolution	765
Total Number of Probable Cause Findings	180
Resolution after a Probable Cause Finding	55
Still Pending Final Resolution as of June 30, 2006	125

OCRC Glossary of Terms

Settlements and Withdrawal of Charges with Settlement can be reached at any time after a charge of discrimination has been filed. Parties are offered the opportunity to resolve their dispute through OCRC's mediation services. Both the charging party and respondent must agree to the settlement. Approximately 83% of all charges electing mediation are successfully resolved.

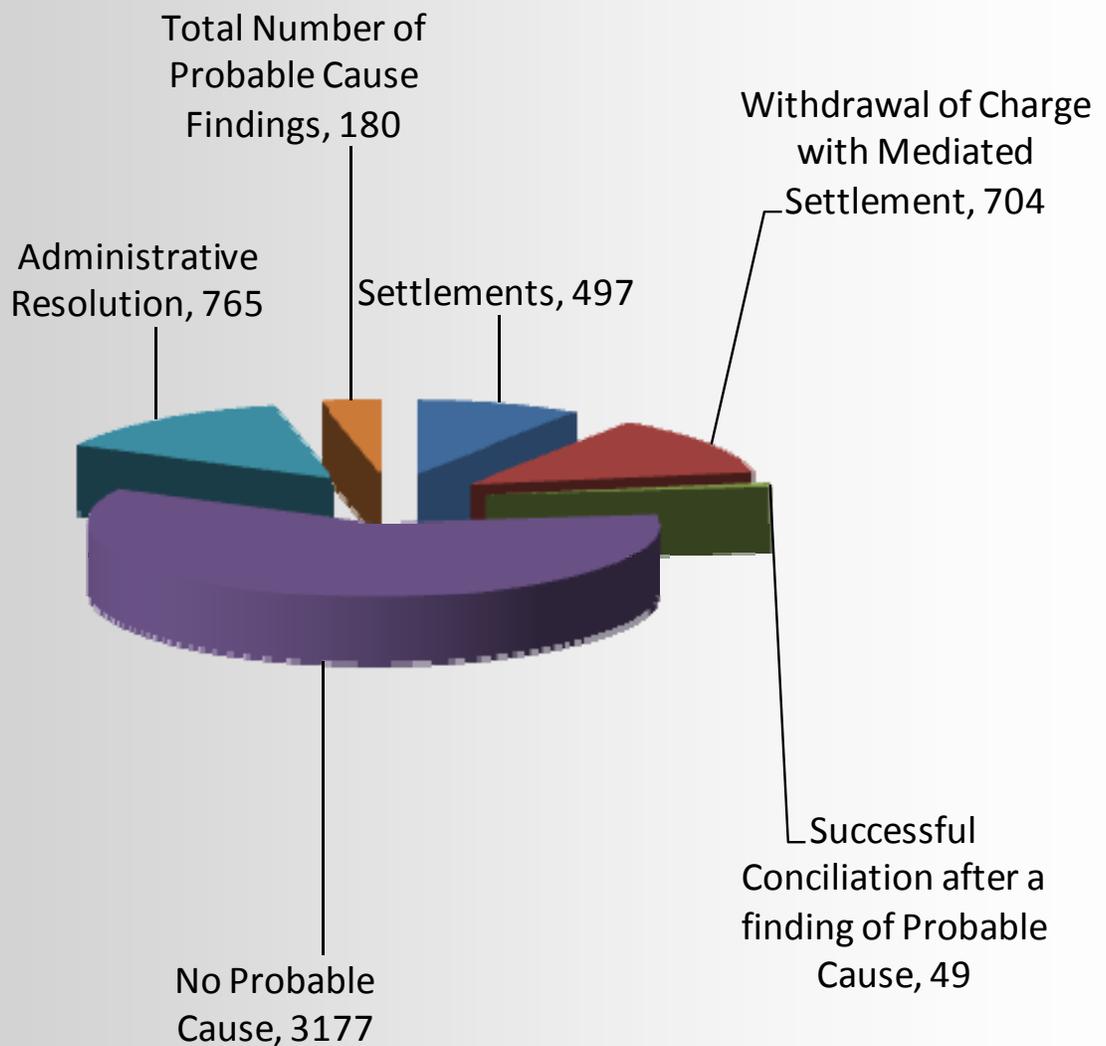
Administrative Resolutions include cases where the charging party elects to withdraw the charge and/or pursue the claim through the court system; cases where the Commission is unable to locate the respondent or charging party; or if the agency determines the charge to be non-jurisdictional.

Successful Conciliations are settlements reached after a preliminary finding of probable cause.

No Probable Cause findings are issued after a full investigation concludes that evidence failed to show a discriminatory act took place.

Probable Cause findings are issued after a full investigation reveals that there is sufficient evidence to conclude it is probable that a discriminatory act took place. OCRC attempts to conciliate these charges and reach a settlement. When conciliation attempts fail, the charge is referred to the office of the Attorney General and, if necessary, a public hearing (administrative adjudication) is held.

Charges Closed by Resolution



Education & Outreach

The Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) has worked diligently to inspire cultural awareness and sensitivity in our state through education and outreach activities. The following are our education and outreach activities for FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006):

July

- ◆ OCRC receives National Public Service Award For Proactive Preventive Measures from EEOC.
- ◆ Chairman Wheeler & Diane Citrino selected to sit on the United States Commission On Civil Rights, Ohio Advisory Board
- ◆ Greene County Prosecutor hosted Chairman Wheeler on television show
- ◆ OCRC hosts What Next? Cleveland Forum
- ◆ OCRC met with Ohio Council On American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) to discuss CAIR's continuing concerns about discrimination against Arab-Americans in the workplace and housing
- ◆ Ramona Uter and Anita Jackson conducted the Columbus region's second "What Is Discrimination?"
- ◆ Anthony Corona partners with Dayton Public Schools to educate 11th and 12th graders, particularly Spanish-speaking students, on civil rights laws.
- ◆ Diane Citrino participated in a Northern Ohio Hate Crime Taskforce "Stand Against Hate" meeting and discussed issues related to housing discrimination. Diane also attended the 61st annual board meeting of the American Jewish Committee to discuss tolerance projects.

August

- ◆ OCRC held "Lunch & Learn" workshop in Columbus at Westland Mall to reach out to LEP community and provide a presentation on basic civil rights protections and how to use agency's services.

September

- ◆ OCRC held “Lunch & Learn” workshop in Cleveland, Cincinnati and Dayton to reach out to LEP community and provide a presentation on basic civil rights protections and how to use agency’s services.

October

- ◆ Commissioner Donaldson held a day-long grand opening celebration for the Elyria YWCA’s new shelter for women. At this event, Diane Citrino participated as a panelist for a discussion of hate crimes and Cleveland Investigator Jerry Washington met with residents and provided OCRC information
- ◆ The OCRC joined with the EEOC and hosted a joint “Know Your Rights!” community forum at Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio
- ◆ OCRC held “What Next? Summit” in Columbus. State Senator Ray Miller publicly expressed his support for the mission and work of the OCRC. Professor John A. Powell, Executive Director of The Ohio State University’s (“OSU”) Kirwan Institute For The Study Of Race and Ethnicity provided keynote address.
- ◆ Iris Choi provided investigative and EEO training to EEO Officers for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

November

- ◆ Matt Miko provided presentation on hate crimes and the OCRC’s investigates process at the Northern Ohio Hate Crime Working Group conference at the NASA Research Center in Cleveland.
- ◆ OCRC attended Diversity Coalition Meeting to facilitate dialogue and common ground on issues impacting minority’s lives.

January

- ◆ EEOC invited Keith McNeil to provide nationwide training to EEOC investigators and state Fair Employment Practices Agencies.

Education & Outreach

February

- ◆ Commissioner Donaldson helped to establish a Lorain County Hate Crimes Working Group modeled from the Northern Ohio Hate Crimes Working Group.
- ◆ Executive Director Payton and Ronnell Tomlinson met with Cleveland Housing Advocates Incorporated to establish a Fair Housing Improvement Program (“FHIP”) in Columbus.
- ◆ Diane Citrino met with members of the Legal Aid Society and two fair housing groups to discuss fair housing issues and predatory lending.
- ◆ Chairman Wheeler served as a guest speaker at Karumu House in Cleveland and provided a keynote address titled “Civil Rights Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow” at the Cleveland City Club.
- ◆ OCRC attended West Virginia Civil Rights Day Celebration “From Whence We Came” in Charleston, West Virginia
- ◆ OCRC co-sponsored a voting rights community forum with the Columbus Community Relation Commission
- ◆ Jean McEntire and Norm Gibson participated in a discussion on the television station WLW-TV Issues program about the outcome of a survey on race relations in Cincinnati.
- ◆ Ronnell Tomlinson appeared as a guest on the region’s television show “OCRC Presents” to discuss predatory lending.

March

- ◆ Iris Choi provided keynote address titled “My Immigrant Experience” at the Cleveland Chinese Women’s Association’s annual banquet.

April

- ◆ OCRC participates in Bowling Green State University –Civil Rights Days, holding a public forum and conducting class presentations across campus.
- ◆ Toni Delgado appeared on OCRC Dayton’s television show “Know Your Rights”

May

- ◆ OCRC hosted an honorary reception for former OCRC Chairman Dr.

Arthur Peterson in the central office.

- ◆ Keith McNeil taught a two-hour class on gender issues and Ohio law for Law Professor Chuck Cohen and twenty law students at Capital University Law School in Columbus. He also conducted a two-hour open forum at Shawnee State University on May 4th to discuss change and evolution of culture, law and political movements related to the gay, lesbian and transgender community from 1950 to the present and how it contrasts with the gender and race movement from 1900 to the present.
- ◆ Ronnell Tomlinson attended Ohio State University's Multiple Perspectives On Access, Inclusion & Disability.
- ◆ Diane Citrino attended a meeting of the Lorain County Hate Crimes Working Group and provided a presentation on housing discrimination.

June

- ◆ OCRC attends Northern Ohio Hate Crime Working Group in Cleveland
- ◆ Marguerite Walker and Charles Scandrick participated in a town hall meeting Justice Panel along with Rep. Dixie Allen.

Akron Regional Office

Diane Citrino, Akron's Regional Director, was a co-chair of the 100th Anniversary of the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, and hosted a 1,000 person celebration for the agency that has diligently served the legal needs of the poor. Ms. Citrino was privileged to introduce the keynote speaker, the Honorable Senator Hilary Rodham Clinton. Ms. Citrino was appointed to the Ohio Advisory Committee to the United State Civil Rights Commission, where she joins Commissioner Ramos and Chairman Wheeler.

Ms. Citrino is a graduate of Brown University (B.A. 1979, Phi Beta Kappa) and the University of California at Berkeley, Boalt Hall School of Law (J.D. 1982). She has co-authored several publications on discrimination, including "Cause of Action for Handicapped Discrimination in Housing in Violation of the Federal Fair Housing Act [42 U.S.C.A. 3601 et seq.] and Related Federal Statutes," 22 Causes of Action 2d, West Publishing Co., June 2003. (co-authored with David Oakley and Edward Kramer).



Regional Director, Diane Citrino
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"When I was young, I didn't understand the bigger world, but I always knew that the concept of fairness was important. As I got older I saw that major events in the world all have an element of race or inequality. The events of September 11th, and the Hurricane Katrina disaster are examples that bring to our attention how important our work really is." — Sandra Manis, Supervisor Investigator

I am at my best when I am called upon to explain and teach. The opportunity to teach about civil rights law in Ohio is such a rewarding experience, because it presents the opportunity to have others examine themselves and what motivates them. Accentuating the positives, I have seen the miraculous transformation of people, who, after having learned the basic tenets of the law redefine themselves to be better employees, better managers and better business owners—Ramona Uter, Investigator

Cincinnati Regional Office

H. Jean Marshall-McEntire, is the Cincinnati Regional Director for the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. She has distinguished herself both in her profession and as a community leader. As Regional Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, she leads and directs a staff that investigates approximately 600 discrimination cases in sixteen Ohio counties each year.

She is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati, with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Psychology. Some of her previous positions include teacher of public and parochial schools, former sales manager and deputy director for the State of Ohio, account executive for a foreign company, vice-president of a worldwide company, and former Project Director for the Coalition of Neighborhoods. She has developed an anti-drug program for schools that teaches young people how to make wise choices.

She has received numerous awards and commendations for her public service.



**Regional Director,
H. Jean McEntire
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Prior to joining the commission, I worked with an attorney whose practice focused on helping people get their social security.

Naturally, I was always interested in working in a field that helped people and I wanted to give back to the community. I think the commission is a great place to work because I am learning a lot about discrimination and I am doing my part in helping my community.—Patricia Houston

The work we do is difficult to quantify because its successes are not always easily visible. As a Commission, we have the opportunity to make significant, positive changes to lives in our communities. I can't imagine anything more rewarding than that.—Ryan Coslett

This work really means equality and making sure that everyone has the exact same resources.

Housing discrimination is the most heinous form of discrimination because it affects where someone gets to live. We see that a lot with predatory lending and familial status, as well. Now that I have children it hits especially close to home when a person comes to me to file a charge after he or she has been looking for an apartment, and is told that children are not wanted "because we don't want them to get hurt" or "we don't want your children making noises." We make a difference when we are able to help those people.—Eric McCrary

Cleveland Regional Office

Ms. Choi joined the Commission's Toledo Regional Office in 1989 as an Investigator. She was promoted to Reconsideration Supervisor in the Cleveland Regional Office in '92, to Chief Supervisor in '93, and Regional Director in '94. Ms. Choi's educational background includes a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Sociology, an MBA in Personnel Management and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Toledo. As Regional Director, Ms. Choi oversees the day-to-day operation of the Commission's Cleveland Regional Office. She has a staff of 15 persons responsible for receiving, investigating/resolving approximately 1,000 discrimination complaints a year from 10 counties throughout Northeastern Ohio, including Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga, Ashtabula, Erie, Huron, Richland, Ashland, and Medina counties.



Regional Director, Iris Choi
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I believe that the work is as important as ever, especially in light of the reactions to 9/11 and how readily some people are willing to give up their rights for a small sense of security. I believe that counseling is the most important, and most overlooked part of the job. Not every case is discrimination, but you can always give information to someone that can help them avoid problems and direct them to the proper agency to assist them if we cannot.—Eddie Marcus

*I feel that the work we do is very important. We are put into in a very pivotal position in that we have the power to help reverse a wrong that was done and to help improve a person's life. When a person faces discrimination at work or in housing, those are two major aspects of a person's life and have a great impact on how they function. Hopefully, we can help them in those areas and allow them to live their life to the best they can.
—Vera Boggs*

Columbus Regional Office

Beleta Ebron has served as Columbus Regional Director for the Ohio Civil Rights Commission for ten years. Ms. Ebron manages a staff of seventeen employees who investigate and process charges of discrimination.

Having worked for the Commission for twenty-five years, Ms. Ebron previously served as an Investigator, first line Supervisor and Chief Supervisor. In an effort to remain current in the civil rights arena, Beleta continuously receives training in EEO, Fair Housing, Diversity and Race Relations Dialogues.

Ms. Ebron received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology and Sociology from Capital University in Columbus.



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My work provides an opportunity for me to be a model for reconciliation in civil rights, bringing about diversity and healing the divisions between each of us. With pride, I announce that these opportunities have permitted me to accomplish a long term goal of helping to erode the wrongs of the past, educating and changing people's views about others and their differences. As a leader in civil rights, it is my responsibility to do and support what is morally right and fair. There must be a continual fight in making a difference in this struggle for fairness, no matter how small the contribution.—

Mary Jennings

I was raised to be a human rights activist. While studying in Europe, I specialized in international human rights work, which is my passion. Upon relocating to Columbus, I learned a lot about the state's civil rights laws, and I realized it closely resembled what I had studied before. I followed my passions, which lead me to apply for an internship at the Commission, and like they say, the rest is history.—Beyan Asoba

Dayton Regional Office

Marguerite Tyler Walker is the Dayton Regional Director for The Ohio Civil Rights Commission. She is a graduate of the University of Dayton (MA Ed.), Columbia University (MSW), North Carolina Central University (BA), and has completed requirements in Advance Mediation at Capitol University.

As Regional Director for OCRC, Mrs. Walker has spearheaded a variety of innovative educational and outreach programs. She is the Creator and Executive Producer of the Commission's television program "Many Faces One Cause". The program highlights the Commission's operations, the laws it enforces, and introduces special program initiatives of the Commission. Under Mrs. Walker's leadership, the Dayton staff has been instrumental in providing tutorial services in reading to public middle school students. This activity has resulted in the staff donating over 600 books to the school's libraries. Because of her commitment to literacy, Mrs. Walker serves as a Board Member and Officer of the Miami Valley Literacy Council. The Dayton staff provides the educational component of the Naturalization Final Hearing activities of the U.S. Federal District Court. In addition, the region co-sponsored, with the University of Dayton Law School, the Durban to Dayton Community Summit Against Racism. Mrs. Walker actively participates in the Dayton Dialogue on Race, another local effort to improve race relations.



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This work is an opportunity to provide a forum from which an individual may seek justice so that our country may live up to the creed and promise of equal justice for all.—Rachel Brower

I find my work fulfilling and extremely important. In my opinion, discrimination is caused by ignorance and misinformation. My Region really puts an emphasis on outreach/education. I look forward to continuing to use education as a tool to fight discrimination.—Anthony R. Corona

Toledo Regional Office

Darlene Sweeney-Newbern is the Toledo Regional Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. She has over 14 years experience in investigating and supervising fair housing and employment issues. She has investigated and/or supervised insurance redlining charges filed against Farmers Insurance, Nationwide Insurance, Allstate Insurance, State Farm Insurance and Prudential Insurance.

Ms. Newbern has worked closely with the Attorney General's Office in Ohio, advocacy groups and civil rights enforcement agencies in Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Ohio to expedite, educate, train and provide assistance in investigating all types of housing charges.

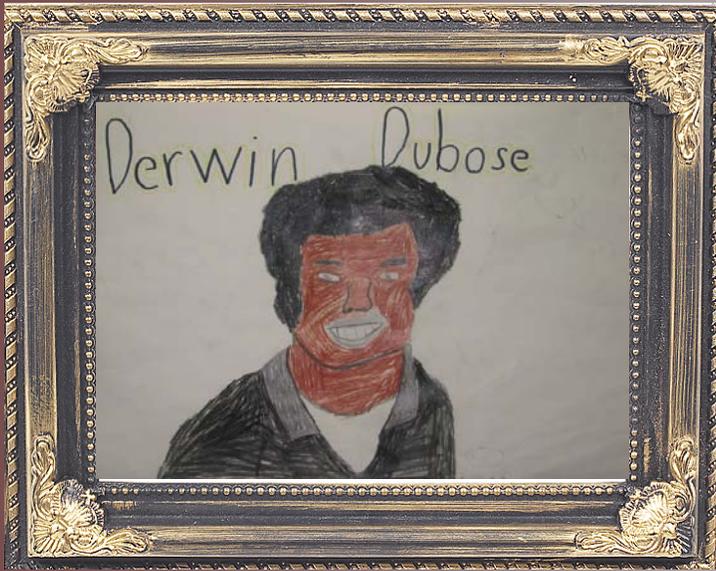
Ms. Newbern has been a presenter at the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) National Fair Housing Conferences in 2000, 2002 and 2003 as well as various conferences around the United States. Ms. Sweeney-Newbern received a bachelor degree in business from the University of Toledo.



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*Year after year I become more proud of the work I do and that OCRC does as a whole. I feel a sense of purpose when I perform this work. I feel I contribute to a vital and excellent cause and realize that it takes many "moving parts" to reach OCRC's destination. I'm privileged to see with my own eyes the good that OCRC does. I'm also honored to use my own "moving parts" to help OCRC make a positive difference in our world.—
RaShonda Graham*

I truly love my job and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't thank God for giving me the opportunity to work in a profession that gives me so much happiness. As a mediator I am able to help countless individuals resolve their conflict. Nothing gives me more pleasure than having two parties who were at such odds with one another walk out of my door having resolved their issues. I don't think as a youngster I could have imagined I would be in a job so rewarding as what I have today. Communication is the essential key in helping people work out their differences and I am so happy to be able to help our customers in this process.—Brad Adams



Art Contest Winner, Grade 3
Gavyn Partlow
Northwestern Elementary School
New Carlisle, OH



Art Contest Winner, Grade 4
Samantha Miller
Whittier Elementary School
Massillon, OH

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