

LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



FY2010 Annual Report *A Year In Review*





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**LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

The Honorable Jim Gray
Mayor of Lexington-Fayette Urban County, Kentucky

The Honorable Members of the Urban County Council
Lexington-Fayette Urban County, Kentucky

Dear Mayor Gray and Members of the Urban County Council:

On behalf of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commissioners and staff, I am pleased to submit to you the Commission's FY 2010 annual report. This annual report highlights the activities of our compliance and community relations programs during the past fiscal year.

We continue to face many challenges at the Commission, but are extremely proud of the Commission's continued accomplishments. Persistent reduction in funding continues to challenge us in the way we do business. We continue to look for ways to work smarter with decreasing resources and increasing workloads. While we have learned to adapt, we must find resources to fulfill our statutory mandate.

The community can look forward to our increased efforts to provide the best services in our work to make this community safe and vibrant. We strive for a community where people can work, live, learn and raises their families through promoting an appreciation for diversity and encouraging positive human relations.

As we move forward, we respectfully ask for your continued support of our efforts to carry out our statutory duties.

Sincerely,

Raymond A. Sexton
Interim Executive Director

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission to safeguard all individuals within Lexington-Fayette Urban County from discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, familial status and sexual orientation/ gender identity in connection with housing, employment and public accommodations and to effect the provisions and purposes of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act (K.R.S. Chapter 344), Urban County Ordinance 199-94 and 201-99, provision 7.17 of the Lexington Fayette Merger Charter of 1974, and any other laws enacted by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County relating to the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission.

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission shall act to encourage and effect the guarantee of equal rights to all citizens, which rights are assured by the Constitution and the Laws of the United States, of Kentucky, and of Lexington-Fayette Urban County and to serve as an investigative, consultative, educational, persuasive, and enforcement agency in order to guarantee equal opportunity for all people of the City of Lexington and Fayette County.

UNIQUENESS

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission is an independent chartered agency of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, with three (3) specific functions: (1) to receive complaints, conduct investigations, hold hearings and have such studies made as will enable the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission to carry out the purpose of the Ordinance; (2) to promote and secure a mutual understanding and respect among all ethnic groups in Fayette County; and (3) to act as conciliator in controversies involving inter-group and inter-racial relations.

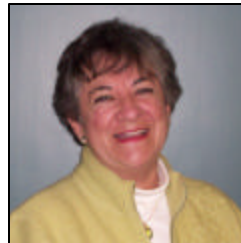
VALUES

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission stands for equal rights, equal opportunity, justice and fair enforcement of the ideals. To carry out this belief, we must strive to follow through on our commitments, maintain objectivity and fairness and provide prompt, responsive and patient attention to all those who seek our assistance. We must respect differences in values and behaviors, support one another, and seek alternatives to divisive conflict. We must commit to meet and exceed contractual, service, and mission related requirements by setting clear expectations and maintaining measurable standards. In addition, we must serve all people in an impartial and fair manner. Equality for all - it's a right, not a privilege.

Commissioners

The Commission is composed of fourteen (14) members who are nearly as possible representative of the several social, economic, cultural, ethnic and racial groups which compose the population of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County. Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County, subject to confirmation by a majority of the members of the Urban County Council.

Rabbi Marc A. Kline
Chair (-12/2009)
Appointed 05/2005



Magdalena "Biby"
Tinajero
Secretary (-12/2009)
Chair (01/2010-)
Appointed 10/2005



Michael Ades
Appointed 02/2010

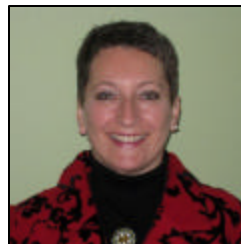


J. Scott Benton
Appointed 09/2008



Tracy Dennis
Vice Chair (01/2010-)
Appointed 02/2008

Beth Hartmann
Treasurer (01/2010-)
Appointed 08/2008



Pam Duncan
Appointed 02/2010



Lindsay Mattingly
Appointed 07/2009



Eli Mertens
Secretary (01/2010-)
Appointed 06/2008



Doug Vowels
Appointed 02/2010

NOT PICTURED: Nadia Rasheed, Appointed 09/2009

Thank You for Your Service

The following Commissioners left the Commission during the fiscal year. The Commission would like to thank them for their invaluable service on the Commission. Their contributions were greatly appreciated.



Chris Ford joined the Commission in April 2008. Chris served on the Budget, Housing and Personnel & Policy Committees during his tenure. He resigned from the Commission in March 2010 to run for the Urban County Council and was successful in his bid for First District Councilmember.

Gwen Godfrey was appointed in December 2005. During her tenure on the Commission, Gwen served on the Personnel & Policy Committee and as Chair of the Housing Committee. Gwen's term expired January 1, 2010.



Luis Wayne Sanchez joined the Commission in January 2006. Wayne served on the Budget and Personnel & Policy Committees and was elected to the position of Treasurer in January 2007 and served in that position until his term expired on January 1, 2010.

Jenny Sutton-Amr was appointed in December 2005. During her tenure, Jenny served on the Community Relations Committee and as Chair of the Personnel & Policy Committee. Jenny was elected as Co-Vice Chair in January 2007 and served in that position until her term expired January 1, 2010.



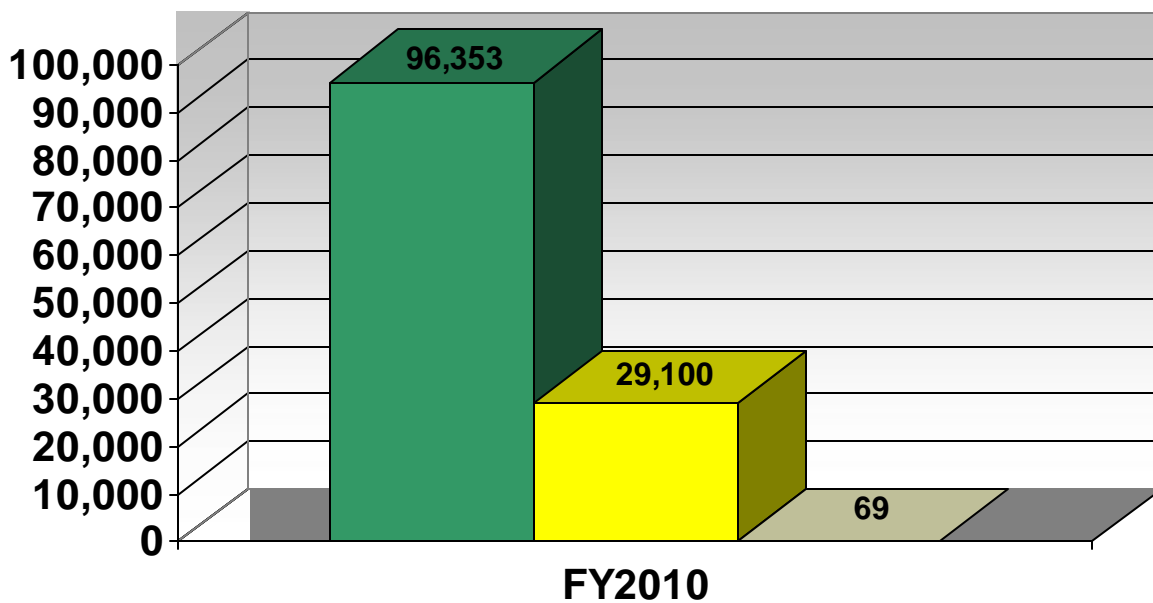
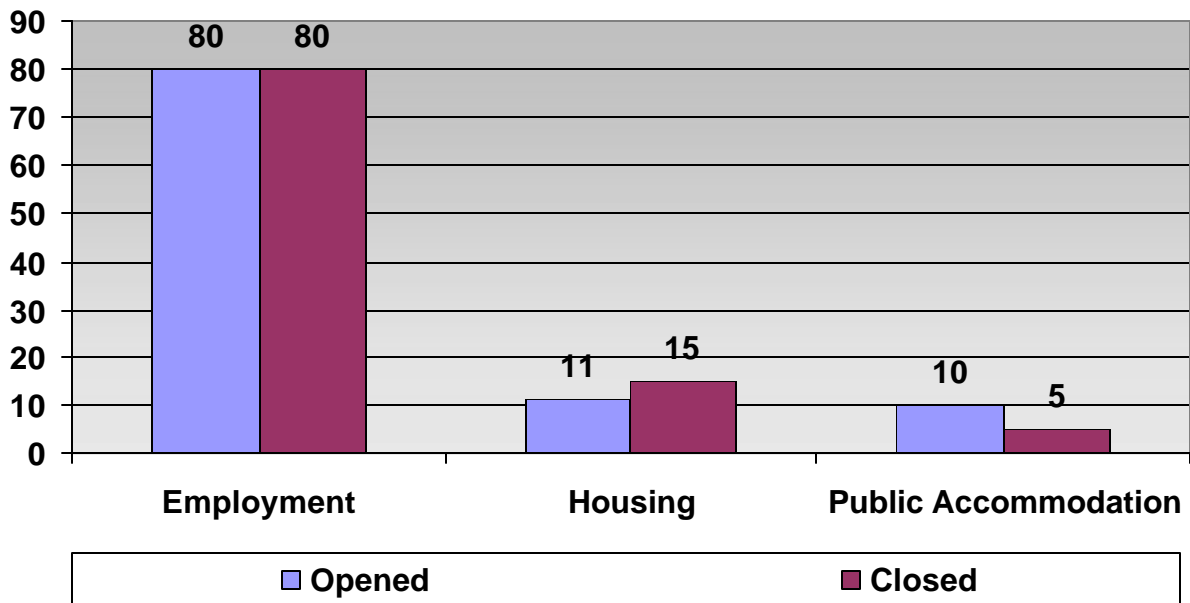
Melanie Tyner-Wilson joined the Commission in October 2005. Melanie served on the Budget and Housing Committees and as Chair of the Community Relations Committee. She was elected as Co-Vice Chair in January 2007 and served in that position until December 31, 2009. Melanie resigned from the Commission in June 2010.

Alicia Vinson was appointed in February 2008. During her tenure on the Commission, Alicia served on the Community Relations and Housing Committees. Alicia's term expired January 1, 2010.

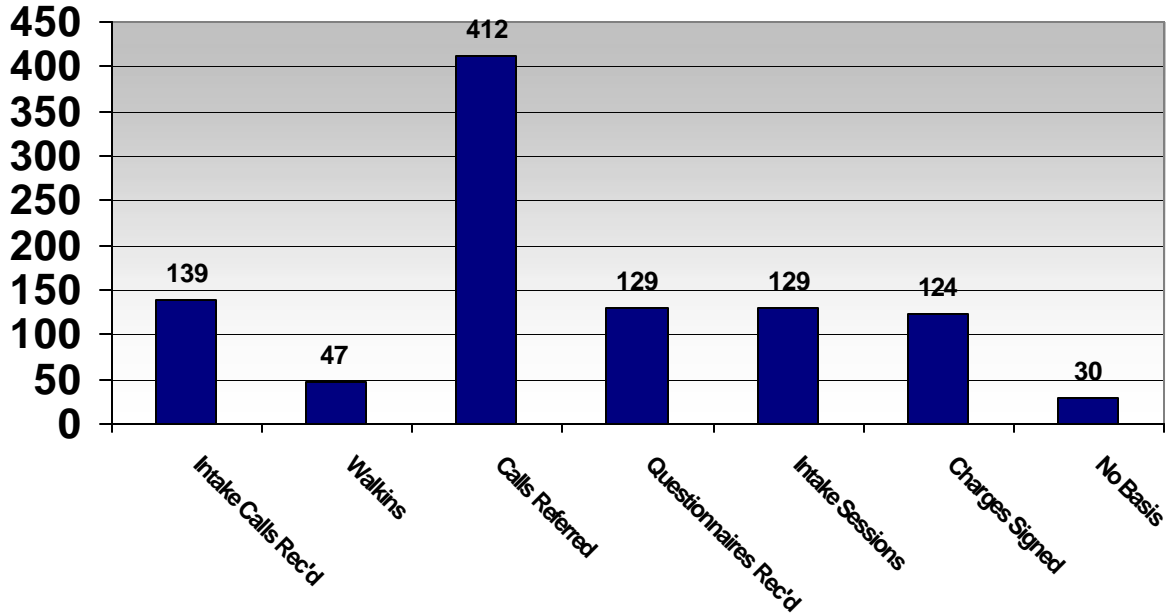


Complaint Enforcement

FY2010 Charges Opened v. Charges Closed



FY2010 Compliance Activities



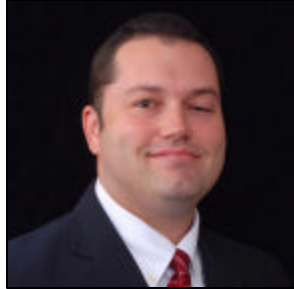
Community Relations

Due to budget cuts over the past couple of years, the Commission's Community Relations Program is not at the level we desire. The Commissioners and staff try to attend every community event as our limited budget allows. However, the Commission is still very dedicated to its Community Relations Program, with focus on Fair Housing, and hopes to see it restored to what it once was. During the period, the Commission attended 24 community events and conducted five (5) trainings and workshops.

Information and Referral

Many individuals contact the Commission needing services beyond the scope of our authority. Many of the contacts involve housing issues, especially landlord-tenant. In FY2007 we updated our Rental Housing Guide and posted the changes to our website. In addition, we updated our information resources and made necessary referrals to other agencies on non-jurisdictional employment and housing, health and human services, disabilities, education, domestic violence, and public safety.

Staff



Raymond A. Sexton
Interim Executive
Director



Tami J. Reed
Senior Office Manager



Tiffany A. Tatum
Investigator II



Emily J. Williams
Investigator I



Edward E. Dove
Commission Attorney

Thank You...



FY 2010 brought an end to a significant era at the Commission with the departure of long-time Executive Director, William D. Wharton in December 2009. William was appointed Executive Director of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission on July 1, 1991 after serving as Acting Executive Director from June 27, 1990. William had previously been employed as a Legislative Analyst with the Legislative Research Commission, a Public Defender and private legal practice.

During his nineteen-year career with the Commission, William built a reputation as a tough, but fair adjudicator of equal opportunity issues arising in Fayette County. Under his leadership, the Commission received local and national recognition for its work in civil rights enforcement. In 1999, the Commission was awarded a HUD's Best Practices Outstanding Achievement Award for its work in fair housing enforcement and education.

Throughout William's tenure, the Commission experienced some significant events that continue to impact today's events. The 1994 police shooting of Tony Sullivan, a young black male, led to racial tension and civil unrest in downtown Lexington. In the days and weeks that followed, the Commission took an active conciliatory role, bridging the gap of the racial divide caused by this shooting. In *Mary Bishop v. LFUCG Detention Center*, the Commission fought for and received a favorable decision in a sexual harassment case that concluded: "a single incident of sexual harassment, if sufficiently egregious, may justify a remedy under the local ordinance." In 1999, the Commission was instrumental in assisting the Urban County Government for the passage of the Fairness Ordinance, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodations.

During his career in civil rights enforcement, William received personal recognition for his outstanding work from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the American Civil Liberties Union, NAACP and LFUCG Division of Police to name a few. He was very active in promoting the work of the Commission and served on countless boards and committees, furthering the mission of the agency.

From a compliance perspective, William's leadership resulted in over 3,800 total cases closed and \$2,254,038 in benefits to Charging Parties.

The Commission would like to thank William Wharton for his tireless work and his many years of dedication. We know the fight for equal opportunity is a never-ending battle, but William built a strong foundation at the Lexington Human Rights Commission that will more than prepare us for the battles that lie ahead. The impact that William's leadership brought will always be an echo throughout the hallway of the Commission office.