



# ON FAIR GROUND

A SEMIANNUAL FAIR HOUSING NEWSLETTER OF THE LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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## Don't Borrow Trouble™

We have all seen the aggressive marketing campaigns for refinance and home equity loans. They may seem tempting but they may not be the best financing alternative — they could even risk a family's financial health, a home's equity and the stability of a neighborhood. Knowledge is protection — learning about refinancing and the mortgage process puts the power to protect both home and family in the homeowner's hands.

*Don't Borrow Trouble™* is a comprehensive consumer awareness program that combines public education and counseling services to help homeowners and home borrowers avoid the pitfalls of these aggressive marketing and lending practices that include excessive fees and practices that strip away a home's equity. This program will educate the public on a broad range of unscrupulous tactics from “too good to be true” home loans, to seemingly friendly payday lending and intrusive door to door contractors. *Don't Borrow Trouble™* was pioneered in Boston by Mayor Thomas M. Menino

and the Massachusetts Community & Banking Council (MCBC). Freddie Mac is expanding the campaign to communities nationwide.

Kentucky Housing Corporation, along with the Kentucky Predatory Lending Prevention Committee, which is made up of more than thirty (30) different organizations, are spearheading the campaign to bring the *Don't Borrow Trouble™* program to eleven (11) target cities including Ashland, Bowling Green, Covington/Newport, Elizabethtown/Radcliff, Frankfort, Hazard, Hopkinsville, Lexington, Louisville, Mayfield and Morehead.

The *Don't Borrow Trouble™* Kentucky program will use a variety of coordinated efforts to deliver the message of the campaign. This includes a toll-free number, printed materials, public service announcements, web sites, referrals and more. In addition, Working Groups of concerned organizations are being developed that will focus on continuing the

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## National Fair Housing Training Academy

The National Fair Housing Training Academy is a five-week certification program designed to provide fair housing enforcement staff with knowledge and skills to conduct efficient and timely investigations throughout the country. The Academy was created and funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development (HUD) in partnership with the D.C. Office for Human Rights and Howard University. The Academy's primary purpose is to provide fair housing investigative training to civil rights professionals responsible for enforcing fair housing laws. Some of

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# FY2007 First Quarter Summary

## Compliance

During the First Quarter of FY2007, the staff received four (4) new housing complaints to investigate. Two (2) complaints were referred to mediation, with one (1) case successfully mediating with a monetary award of \$1,500 to the Complainant.

Staff closed two (2) housing complaints, both with monetary benefits totaling \$1,999 for two (2) complainants.

## Community Relations

During the First Quarter of FY2007, the staff attended 11 community meetings or events related to fair housing and conducted two (2) training sessions for community groups and housing providers.

During the period, staff attended five (5) training opportunities including three (3) staff members attending individual sessions of HUD's National Fair Housing Training Academy.

Staff conducted two (2) site visits during the period.

*The Commission began its mediation program in FY2004. Since its inception, twelve (12) Complainants have received monetary benefits totaling \$52,573*

## Don't Borrow Trouble *continued from pg. 1*

education effort on a long term basis. To date, Working Groups are operating in Hardin County (serving Elizabethtown, Radcliff, and Fort Knox), Lexington, Louisville and Morehead.

The Lexington Working Group is lead by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Division of Community Development and is made up of over twenty (20) local organizations that includes the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission. For more information on the Lexington group

contact Paula King of LFUCG Community Development at 859-258-3070 or email at paulak@lfucg.com.

If you feel you have been targeted or have entered into a Predatory Loan, please contact (866) 830-7868 for help. For more information on the statewide Committee contact Anthony Wright, Kentucky League of Cities at (800) 876-4552 or email at awright@klc.org or Laura Sudduth, Kentucky Housing Corporation at 502-564-7630, ext. 222. or email at lsudduth@kyhousing.org.

### *Lexington Housing Facts*

**Hourly wage necessary to afford a two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent: \$11.96<sup>1</sup>**

**Hourly wage necessary to afford a median price home of \$150,000: \$23.54<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>National Low Income Coalitions *Out of Reach 2005*. [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)

<sup>2</sup>Center for Housing Policy's *Paycheck to Paycheck*. [www.nhc.org](http://www.nhc.org)

## NFHTA *continued from pg. 1*

the topics covered during the Academy include: Fair Housing Law and Ethics, Critical Thinking, Discovery Techniques, Negotiation Skills, Interviewing, Briefing Techniques, Testing, Reasonable Accommodation and Data Analysis. During each week of the Academy, participants are required to take a series of examinations that must be passed prior to advancing forward in

the curriculum.

As part of this certification process through HUD, staff of the LFUC Human Rights Commission has collectively attended 12 weeks of the Academy and is currently three (3) weeks away from having three (3) staff members certified. In addition, plans are being made to begin the certification process on the Commission's new compliance staff member.

# Housing News

## LFUCHRC Continued Certification in the FHAP Program

The Staff of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission received notice on October 10, 2006 that our agency has successfully completed its annual assessment by the HUD Atlanta Regional Office and we have been recommended for continued certification and participation in the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP).

To be eligible for assistance through the FHAP program, a state or local agency must first demonstrate that its fair housing law is substantially equivalent to the federal Fair Housing Act and the agency must engage in timely, comprehensive and thorough fair housing complaint performance assessment. Among other things, HUD will consider the following to determine the effectiveness of an agency's fair housing complaint processing:

- 1) The agency's case processing procedures;
- 2) The thoroughness of the agency's case processing;
- 3) A review of case and no cause determinations for quality of investigations and consistency with appropriate standards;
- 4) A review of conciliation agreements and other settlements;
- 5) A review of the agency's administrative closures; and
- 6) A review of the agency's enforcement procedures.

The LFUCHRC, Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission are the only agencies in Kentucky certified to participate in the program.

## Community Reinvestment Alliance of Lexington Receives Grant

CRAL has received a grant of \$26,008 to provide comprehensive housing counseling services. On September 25, 2006, the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced its national awards to state and

local housing counseling agencies. CRAL is a nonprofit organization with a mission of providing homeownership education and counseling to low- and moderate-income families and individuals.

CRAL's housing counseling program is a three-step process that assists clients with understanding the home buying and home eminence process, and in gaining financial literacy and economic self-sufficiency.

## Lexington Fair Housing Council Receives Grant

On October 2, 2006, the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced its award of \$18.1 million in grants to 102 groups in 85 cities throughout the nation to help reduce housing discrimination. The Lexington Fair Housing Council received a grant of \$205,258.

The grants, funded through HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives Program Private Enforcement Initiative will be used to investigate allegations of housing discrimination, educate the public and housing industry about their rights and responsibilities under the Fair Housing

Act, and work to promote equal housing opportunities.

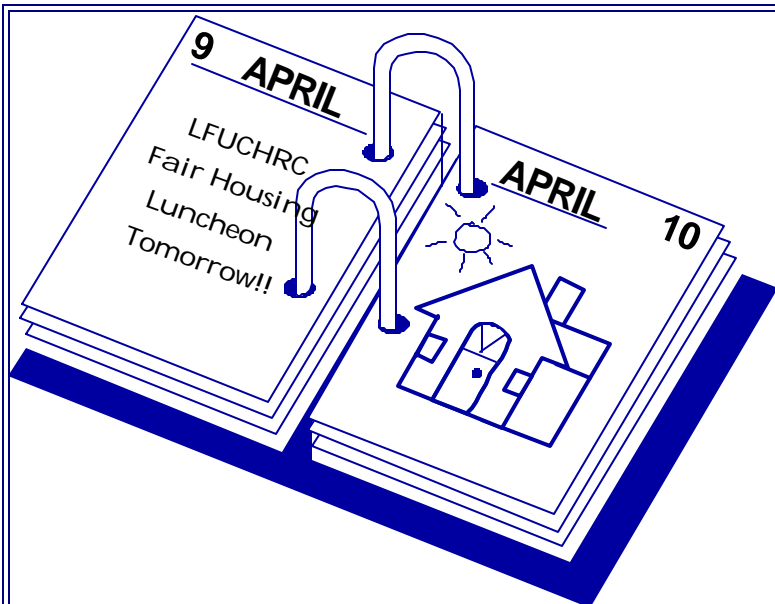
## REACH, Inc. Receives HUD Grant

On September 25, 2006, the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced its national awards to state and local housing counseling agencies. REACH, Inc. received a grant of \$32,016 to provide comprehensive housing counseling services. REACH is a consortium of 26 organizations that was established to assist low- to moderate-income families and individuals become first-time homebuyers.

REACH provides budget, credit and housing counseling services to assist clients become financially self-sufficient. Additionally, the agency provides financial assistance with down payment and closing costs to make homes more affordable.

REACH programs help individuals in Anderson, Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Franklin, Harrison, Jessamine, Madison, Mercer, Montgomery, Scott and Woodford Counties to purchase homes.





# SAVE THE DATE!

## April 10, 2007

**LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY  
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12TH ANNUAL FAIR HOUSING LUNCHEON**



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