



# FAIR HOUSING OF MARIN

*"To ensure equal housing opportunity and to educate the community on the value of diversity in our neighborhoods through counseling, investigation, educational programs and preventive trainings."*

*"Para proteger la igualdad en las oportunidades de vivienda y educar a la comunidad acerca de la importancia de los vecindarios integrados, por medio de consejería, investigación, programas educativos y entrenamientos de prevención."*

Summer 2005

## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF OPENING DOORS 1995 TO 2005

By Nancy Kenyon, Executive Director

"Fair Housing of Marin turns 10! In 1995, Fair Housing of Marin graduated from being a program of the Marin Housing Center (now Homeward Bound) to a fully independent agency. Our successes over that decade are your successes - we salute you."

Celebrating an anniversary calls for retrospective. Once the decision was made in November 1995 to become an independent nonprofit, the dynamic trio of Alex Diefenbach, Barbara de Cordova and I set about looking for a resting place. With help from all quarters, we renovated and made accessible the old office of the Human Rights Resource Center at 615 B Street. Andrew Marshall did the construction work and Tom Woods of T.M.W. Electric the electric work, both at cost. Alex did the architectural drawings and interior design, Jaime Garcia, a former client, painted the interior in record time, a carpet firm sold us carpeting at wholesale and a mover moved us for nothing. Another client with a secondhand furniture company donated many of our existing furniture pieces.

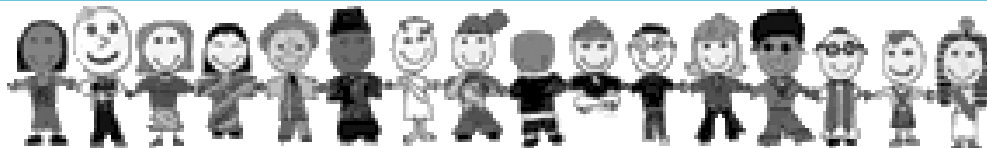
With that expression of support, how could we fail? Indeed, in that decade, we have assisted over 12,000 people, including 2,400 individual discrimination complaints. In that time, 1,550 Realtors, property owners and apartment managers called with inquiries about their policies and practices, and we conducted over 50 seminars on Fair Housing Law for the housing industry, having received accreditation from the California Department of Real Estate.

We launched our popular human rights programs for children and adults - our annual Fair Housing Poster Contest, the Fair Housing Players, A Panel of Americans and the African-American Storyteller Program.

We opened doors for thousands of individuals, many of them families with children and persons with disabilities. One was a single working Mom whose son told her that he would live with his grandparents so she could get the apartment; another was an African-American family with two children who were told to their faces that the owner would not rent to an interracial couple. In a third case, a trailer park that had a policy of not renting to Latinos is now open to all. In a fourth, a woman in a wheelchair who had not been allowed to build a ramp to her new apartment for 3 months received a settlement of \$60,000 from the Homeowners Association and her ramp.

Our 13 audits to uncover systemic discrimination have mobilized support from local government and the general public. New areas of potential discrimination we have looked at include mortgage lending, homeowners insurance, predatory lending and accessibility in new housing developments. Funding from the U.S. Department of HUD made this work possible; this year we received HUD's Pioneer of Fair Housing Award in Washington.

All of this has been accomplished with a top notch staff, a dedicated Board of Directors, many funders and numerous volunteers. To all of you who helped, past and present, we thank you. Your support will take us into a second decade of working toward our goal of a more diverse and inclusive Marin. ■



GOOD NEIGHBORS COME IN ALL COLORS!

## FAIR HOUSING NOTEBOOK

### FAMILY SETTLES CHILD DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT

A couple and their two children attempted to apply for a unit at a Novato apartment complex. They were told families with children could only live on the ground floor and as there were no bottom floor units available, they were out of luck. The woman later contacted Fair Housing of Marin because of her interest in becoming a "tester" and confirmed that she had experienced discrimination. The investigation conducted by FHOM corroborated her experience. She joined FHOM in a lawsuit alleging discrimination against families with children. The case settled in principal for \$34,000, including funds for Fair Housing training and dissemination of non-discrimination statements to tenants, pending signature of all parties, including the presiding judge. ■

### SUCCESSFUL REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

FHOM negotiated a reasonable accommodation for a Latino woman in Novato, a single mother with one child, pregnant with a second. The woman had a mental disability and a high-risk pregnancy. The woman stated that her landlord had taken advantage of her mental disability to coerce her into signing a one-year lease, although they had previously agreed upon a month-to-month rental. The tenant also alleged that the landlord questioned and watched her every move and that the stress of feeling so distrusted and scrutinized had hurt her mental and physical well-being. The tenant gave a thirty-day notice and the landlord then reminded her of the substantial penalties of breaking her one-year lease. FHOM was able to work out an agreement whereby the landlord agreed to let her move out without penalty. ■



Nancy Kenyon received national award

### NANCY KENYON RECEIVED HUD PIONEER AWARD

Nancy Kenyon, FHOM's Executive Director was honored by HUD last spring in Washington DC for her outstanding commitment and dedication to fair housing and in particular for her efforts to investigate and bring awareness to the issues of discrimination in senior housing. Larry Miller, FHOM Board President, commented, "I am constantly impressed by Nancy's dynamic leadership and passion, which continues to open doors. Her commitment has been life-long and is an inspiration to her staff and the community at large." ■

## DID YOU KNOW THAT...

### YOU COULD BE A TARGET OF A PREDATORY LOAN?

Abusive loans, also known as predatory loans, are loans that take advantage of the borrower and that the borrower may not be able to repay. Abusive lending can ruin your credit and cause you to lose your home. Learn to recognize these loans and to say no to unfavorable practices. Call us for more information or to request our new brochure "Don't Borrow Trouble" on recognizing and avoiding abusive loans. ■

## BRIEFLY

### RADIO INTERVIEW ON WOSU, OHIO

Nancy Kenyon, FHOM Executive Director, was interviewed in April by WOSU, a radio station in Ohio, to address discrimination issues facing seniors. In 2003, Fair Housing of Marin conducted the first national audit for racial discrimination in residential care facilities for seniors. ■

### FAIR HOUSING ADDRESSES STATEWIDE CONVENTION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

Fair Housing of Marin presented a session on Fair Housing Laws for Residential Care Facility Professionals at the 44th Annual Conference of the California Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (CAHSA) last May in San Jose. CAHSA is a non-profit association representing skilled nursing facilities, affordable senior housing, continuing care retirement communities and residential care facilities for the elders. Hundreds of owners, administrators, staff and service providers to the elderly attended this two-day conference. ■

## SAVE THE DATE

*Join us on September 30 at the Marsh in San Francisco for a special benefit presentation of Brian Copland's popular solo performance, "Not a Genuine Black Man." Don't miss this outstanding show and reception. Details to Come.*

# EDUCATION NEWS



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

**Stephanie Abraham** (5th grade), **Atiha Azam** (5th grade), **Megan Carter** (2nd grade), **Audrey Poole** (Grade: K), **Jordan Stern** (Grade: K), **Tamera Royston** (1st grade), **Miriam Castaneda** (4th grade), **Brittany Righetti** (5th grade), **Tamika Wilson** (6th grade), **Ashley Merceri** (7th grade), **Chris Steines** (8th grade), **Shane Hutchings** (6th grade).  
**Staff Prize:** **Tony Gallo** (7th grade), **Katie Cohen** (3rd grade).

## 2005 POSTER CONTEST

This year's poster Contest was a great success. We received 217 entries from children in grades K-8 on the theme: "Together We Build our Neighborhood." The Awards Ceremony was held in April during a special meeting of the Marin County Board of Supervisors. During the ceremony, winning children received prizes, a certificate of recognition from Senator Carole Migden and a personalized portrait by Morrie Turner. The Mistress of Ceremonies was Mary Jane Burke, Marin Superintendent of Schools.

Fair Housing Proclamations were read by Supervisor Hal Brown. Presenting prizes were: Larry Brackett, President & CEO, Frank Howard Allen; Jack McLaughlin, President, Marin Association of Realtors; Melissa Prandi, President, Prandi Property Management; Benny Stewart, E.D., Marin City Community Development; and Gigi Gamble, Development Assistant, Fair Housing of Marin. We were honored to have Morrie Turner, Nationally Syndicated Cartoonist, WEE PALS, and GUMBY as special guests. The judges for the contest were: Frank Yee, San Francisco City College; Roy Bateman, Community Development Coordinator, Marin County and Jerry Gayle. The contest was funded by: Frank Howard Allen, The Marin Association of Realtors, California Land Title of Marin, Prandi Property Management, and Marin 1 Real Estate & Investment Services. ■

## LITERATURE AVAILABLE

**For People with Disabilities:** We have reprinted our very popular brochure on Reasonable Accommodations for tenants and applicants with disabilities.

**For Tenants:** Call us or drop by to get your copy of our popular Tenant Booklet that contains valuable information on tenant and fair housing laws and tips on credit and apartment hunting. This 40-page booklet

## UPCOMING EVENTS

[Storyteller Program](#) - A free storytelling show for children pre-school through fourth grade on the value of diversity. For more details contact Adriana Ames at 457-2390.

[A Panel of Americans](#) - A free presentation featuring personal stories of Marin residents on issues of stereotypes and prejudice. For schools or adult groups. Contact Cindy Whitman-Bradley at 457-5025 for more information.

[Fair Housing Law and Practice](#) - A 3-hour seminar for housing industry professionals. Our next seminar will be held in late September 2005 in San Rafael. Watch our website for date, email [jane@fairhousingmarin](mailto:jane@fairhousingmarin) or call Jane Shandler at 415-457-5025. ■

## TELL YOUR STORY! JOIN OUR TEAM OF VOLUNTEER PANELISTS

Do you believe education breeds understanding and respect?  
Do you have a story about the role of prejudice in your life?  
Do you enjoy or want to try public speaking?

If your answer is "YES," we invite you to join our program  
**A Panel of Americans.**  
For more information, contact Adriana Ames at 457-2390 x 108  
or [aames@fairhousingmarin.com](mailto:aames@fairhousingmarin.com)

## OPEN DOORS

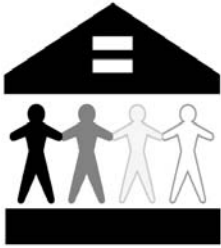
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*"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin?  
 In small places, close to home - so close and so small they  
 cannot be seen on any maps of the world."  
 Eleanor Roosevelt*

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