

# FAIR HOUSING NEWS

Newsletter of the Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit

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## AN INVITATION TO THE FHCMD's 15th ANNUAL FAIR HOUSING LEADERSHIP AWARDS RECEPTION - SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit (FHCMD) is pleased to invite readers of this newsletter, friends of the FHCMD and supporters of fair and equal housing opportunities to attend the Center's 15th Fair Housing Leadership Awards Reception. The Reception will be held on Thursday evening (5 - 7 PM), September 20, 2012 at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum located in Belle Isle Park in Detroit. There will be plenty of free parking for those attending. Tickets, at \$50/person, can be reserved by calling or sending an Email to the FHCMD office (313-963-1274 or fhcdet2@yahoo.com). Very tasty hors d'oeuvres, prepared by Golden Spice Catering, and wine will be on hand.

As in the previous 14 Receptions, this reception will honor persons or firms in the housing industry ("housing providers") who have taken significant actions in support of fair and equal housing opportunities. Forty-eight persons or firms have been recipients of these awards since FHCMD began holding Fair Housing Leadership Awards Receptions in 1998. This year's Award Recipients are:

### Dr. James M. Cambridge

Dr. Cambridge holds a Doctorate in Education from Western Michigan University and has spent his entire career as a teacher, and then principal, for the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, retiring as principal of the Emma V. Lobbestael School in 1997. He qualified as a "housing provider" when he agreed to lease his condominium unit at the Lakeridge Condominium in Harrison Township, Michigan to a person with disabilities, David Lindner, M.D. and his wife and their elderly cat, a service providing animal for Dr. Lindner. The Condominium Association maintained a "no pet" policy, and subsequently threatened Dr. Lindner with eviction and levied fines against Dr. Cambridge. Both Dr. Cambridge and Dr. Lindner contacted the FHCMD for assistance. A housing discrimination lawsuit was filed by Drs. Cambridge and Lindner in Federal Court that was settled with a financial payment to the plaintiffs and a change in the Condominium's policies concerning assistance animals for persons with disabilities.

Dr. Cambridge, after being informed of his selection for a FHCMD Award because of his very unique willingness to come and support his tenant, stated: "I cannot adequately describe the relief Dr. Lindner, his wife and I experienced with the support provided by Michael Olshan, J.D. and FHCMD Cooperating Attorney John Obee. Without the FHCMD, the Lakeridge Condominium Board would have brought great harm, pain and injustice to the Lindner family." On September 20, 2012 the FHCMD will be honored to recognize the support that was provided by a housing provider, Dr. Cambridge, to his tenant, Dr. Lindner.

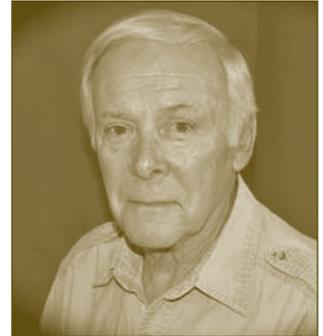
### Huntington Management Company

Cynthia Jones, Executive Director of Huntington Management Company, and Armen Kalaydjian, Developer, formed Huntington Management Company in 1995 in an effort to provide exemplary housing management services in the metropolitan Detroit area. Now, with over 4,000 units in its management portfolio, Huntington Management Company has succeeded while fully supporting and encouraging compliance with fair housing laws. Besides providing fair housing training for the employees of Huntington Management Company, Ms. Jones has arranged for fair housing training for members of the Boards of Directors of housing cooperatives managed by Huntington. Members of Boards of Directors of housing cooperatives and housing condominiums are normally not trained on "fair housing laws" but often make decisions that involve those laws and may expose the cooperative or condominium to housing discrimination lawsuits.

As a previous Property Manager and the Executive Vice President of Management Systems, Inc. Ms. Jones brought tremendous experience, and a deeply rooted commitment to fair housing, to Huntington Management. As stated by Ms. Jones: "Huntington Management believes that the right to decent and safe housing is a right to be enjoyed by all. We find it vitally important to not only 'talk the talk', but to also 'walk the walk'". The FHCMD looks forward to honoring Huntington Management at the 15th Awards Reception.

### Tom Kotzian, J.D.

The FHCMD has previously presented Fair Housing Leadership Awards to a number of persons who have provided fair housing training services to members of the housing industry, including: Leah



Dr. James M. Cambridge



Cynthia Jones



Tom Kotzian, J.D.



Pamela A. Kisch

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## FHCMD CASE UPDATES

The Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit (FHCMD) extends its thanks and appreciation to the plaintiffs, testers, witnesses and attorneys who have assisted the cause of fair housing by participating in the following litigations. It is understood that in all cases reported in this newsletter the defendant, unless noted otherwise, denies the allegations of discrimination made by the plaintiff and, in "settled" cases, the parties have agreed to resolve the case without a final determination by a jury or court. Some of the tests and investigations conducted by FHCMD were paid for with funds made available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

## CLOSED CASES

### Lawrence v Campus Village Communities

FHCMD Cooperating Attorney Mark Magidson has notified FHCMD that Roland Lawrence, an African American male, and Campus Village Communities, owner of an apartment building in Detroit, have reached a settlement in the racial discrimination lawsuit filed by Mr. Lawrence. Terms of the settlement were not disclosed. The Federal lawsuit, before Hon. Mark A. Goldsmith, was dismissed with prejudice. As noted in the September, 2011 issue of the *Fair Housing News* (Volume 33, No. 3), Mr. Lawrence alleged that he was provided with different information and services by agents at the Campus Village building because of his race. Testing by the FHCMD provided evidence supporting his claim of racial discrimination, leading to the successful resolution of the complaint.

### Stephens v S & S Services Property Management Company, Inc.

FHCMD Cooperating Attorney John Lucas has informed FHCMD that a settlement has been reached in the disability discrimination lawsuit filed by Floyd Stephens, a male with a disability that limits his ability to walk, against the S&S Services Property Management Company and Parkcrest Apartments in Westland, Michigan. Terms of the settlement were not disclosed. The March, 2012 issue of the *Fair Housing News*, (Volume 34 No. 1) reported on Mr. Stephens' unsuccessful efforts to obtain a parking place closer to his apartment. After receiving a letter about Mr. Stephens from the FHCMD, the defendant subsequently filed a complaint, in State Court, for the eviction of Mr. Stephens. Mr. Stephens found and moved into other housing, with adequate parking facilities, in Canton, Michigan. His Federal lawsuit, seeking monetary damages and other affirmative relief, was filed in February, 2012. The case was presented before Hon. Stephen J. Murphy, III who issued the Stipulation for Dismissal, with prejudice, in July, 2012.

## NEW CASE

### Southgate Non-Profit Housing Corporation v Frederick Rowe

FHCMD Cooperating Attorney William P. O'Leary has informed FHCMD that 28th State District Court Judge James A. Kandrevas has issued an "Order to Remove Complaint and Counter-Complaint to Circuit Court", removing this eviction proceeding from the District Court. The Counter-Complaint, filed by Attorney O'Leary for Frederick Rowe, a male with disabilities, alleges that the Southgate Non-Profit Housing Corporation's actions resulting in an effort to evict Mr. Rowe from his Southgate apartment were taken in violation of the disability provisions of the Federal Fair Housing Act and the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act. The Michigan Act assigns actions alleging unlawful housing discrimination that are brought under that Act to the State Circuit Court, prompting the removal from the State District Court. Further actions on this case are pending.

## HUD ISSUES A "DETERMINATION OF REASONABLE CAUSE" IN REMBIS v. FRENCH, et al

Fair housing testing conducted by testers from the Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit (FHCMD) provided very useful evidence in support of the claim of racial and familial status discrimination made by Clare and William Rembis (the "Complainants", a bi-racial couple with seven children at the time of the alleged discrimination) against Paula and David French (the "Respondents"), owners of a four bedroom single family home for rent in Hudson, Michigan. As a result of the testimony of Clare and William Rembis, the testing by the FHCMD and the investigation conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) a "Determination of Reasonable Cause" was made by HUD, prompting the filing, before HUD's Office of Administrative Law Judges, of a formal "Charge of Discrimination" against the Respondents.

The HUD "Charge" indicates that in September, 2008 Claire Rembis, responding to a listing for the rental property on [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com), began the family search for a larger and more reasonably priced rental home for their family. On December 1, 2008 Clare and William Rembis visited the French's rental property and, on December 3, Ms. Rembis phoned Paula French and indicated that they "loved" the property and wished to apply. They submitted their application and, on December 5, 2008 Ms. French called Ms. Rembis, indicating that she was in the neighborhood "shopping" and would be stopping by the Rembis home in 15 minutes to "see how [they] live." During the tour of the Rembis home Ms. French asked Ms. Rembis "as a woman of color" if she would "feel comfortable at all" living in an area where there were not many "people of color." Ms. French made other racially related comments along with comments related to the number of children in the Rembis family. On December 9, 2008 the Respondents notified the Complainants that their application for a unit was denied.

Clare and William Rembis then contacted the FHCMD and, by December 15, 2008 the FHCMD testers began the testing process. A white male, with nine family members contacted the Respondents saw the subject property and was repeatedly encouraged to apply. The African American tester, with a family of nine, after visiting the property, was not recontacted or encouraged by the Respondents to apply. The HUD "Determination" states that based on the facts in the case, "...a reasonable person could conclude that Respondents rejected Complainants, at least in part, due to the race or color of Complainant Clare Rembis and her minor children."

FHCMD and FHC of Southeastern Michigan Cooperating Attorney, Jonathan G. Weber, is representing the Rembis family in this matter. Maurice J. McGough, Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Director of the Region V (Chicago) Office of HUD issued the "Determination". The "Charge", submitted by attorneys from the HUD Regional Office, asks the Administrative Law Judge to declare that the Respondents are in violation of the Fair Housing Act, award monetary damages to the Complainants, and award a \$16,000 civil penalty against each of the Respondents.



## A VERY WELCOME GIFT TO FHCMD FROM THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COALITION FOR FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Elaine Adkins, Executive Officer of the Down River Association of Realtors has informed the Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit (FHCMD) that the final financial act of the Southeast Michigan Coalition for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (Coalition) was to donate its remaining assets (in excess of \$9,000) to the FHCMD. Begun in the 1990s with an informal partnership of 14 Realtor Associations, the group provided fair housing information and education programs for Realtors in Southeast Michigan. A high point of their activities was an "Annual Fair Housing Seminar and Luncheon" held during the national observance of Fair Housing Month (April). Staff, Board members and Cooperating Attorneys from the FHCMD were often among the speakers at programs sponsored by the Coalition. A year 2000 luncheon at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, attracted over 400 Realtors to hear about fair housing from Alan J. Heifetz, at that time the Chief Administrative Law Judge of HUD; Saul Green, at that time U.S. Attorney for Southeast Michigan and Stephen R. Tomkowiak, an FHCMD Cooperating Attorney.

In 2004 the participating Associations decided to become more official, forming and incorporating the Southeast Michigan Coalition for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. The original officers, who have continued to serve as officers of the organization, included: Furhad Waquad, President; Bobbi Sexton, Treasurer, and Directors Elaine Adkins, Joyce Beverly and Dale Smith. The membership of the Coalition included:

- Ann Arbor Board of Realtors
- Dearborn Area Board of Realtors
- Detroit Association of Realtors

- Down River Association of Realtors
- Eastern Thumb Association of Realtors
- Flint Area Association of Realtors
- Grosse Pointe Board of Realtors
- Lapeer & Upper Thumb Association of Realtors
- Livingston Association of Realtors
- Metropolitan Consolidated Association of Realtors\*
- Michigan Association of Realtors
- Monroe County Association of Realtors
- North Oakland County Board of Realtors
- Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors\*

*\*These two groups have now formed the Greater Metropolitan Association of Realtors*

The Coalition was very instrumental in encouraging support of and respect for fair housing laws, and has worked cooperatively with the FHCMD on many issues. Those efforts have, no doubt, played a significant role in reducing the number of complaints and lawsuits alleging unlawful housing discrimination in the sale of housing in the metropolitan Detroit area. The Coalition has also been a Gold Sponsor of several FHCMD Annual Fair Housing Leadership Awards Receptions. After its many years of unofficial and official service the members of the Coalition recently agreed to disband the non-profit organization. They were confident that the FHCMD would continue to promote and encourage compliance with fair housing laws and, with much appreciation from the FHCMD, agreed to contribute their remaining assets to the FHCMD.

### LEADERSHIP AWARDS RECEPTION *(continued from page 1)*

Brewer, Margaret L.M. Brown, Marta Saint-James, Lynn Kacy, Deborah Taylor, Dr. E'toile Libbett, Jean Golchuk, Furhad Waquad, Joyce Beverly, Marianne Holman, Doretha Ardoin, Vernon Shadd, and John Obee. The FHCMD is honored to be able to add Tom Kotzian to that distinguished list of Award Recipients, in recognition of his dedication to and years of experience providing fair housing training to members of the real estate industry. Mr. Kotzian, is a Team Leader for Keller Williams Realty Lakeside in Shelby Township, David Klaf, Broker, where he has provided fair housing training to members of the Keller Williams firm. He has been a real estate firm manager for over 30 years, has trained thousands of real estate professionals on fair housing laws and written fair housing training materials and articles on fair housing that have appeared in Michigan and throughout the United States.

Mr. Kotzian is a member of the Board of Directors of the Michigan Association of Realtors (MAR) and has been active in several Detroit area Realtor Associations. In November, 2011 an article that Mr. Kotzian wrote on fair housing testing, "Fair Housing Means 'Equal' Treatment - Testing our Industry" appeared in the Michigan Realtor, a publication of MAR. In the article he notes that "Testers need to be objective observers of events. Testers must be accurate recorders of events." His sound and solid fair housing advice has helped many real estate professionals observe fair housing laws. The FHCMD will be pleased to recognize Mr. Kotzian at the September 20 Awards Reception.

#### **Pamela A. Kisch**

Since the death in 2004, of former FHCMD Coordinator of Investigations and Testing, Marvin Thomas, the FHCMD has included in the Fair Housing Leadership Awards Receptions a presentation of the Marvin Thomas Service Award to a retired

FHCMD tester whose testing experience was particularly significant for fair housing and FHCMD. This year, the FHCMD is pleased to present the Marvin Thomas Service Award to Pamela A. Kisch, Executive Director of the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan and former Assistant Testing Coordinator for the FHCMD. From January, 1991 to February, 1994 Ms. Kisch helped Marv Thomas investigate complaints, conduct fair housing tests, assign and coordinate other fair housing tests and prepare cases with significant evidence for referral to FHCMD Cooperating Attorneys. Marv relied on Pam, trusted her work and valued her insights and observations. It was a busy time for FHCMD, with over 80 FHCMD investigated cases between 1991 and 1994 referred to FHCMD Cooperating Attorneys for litigation.

And, while working with the FHCMD Ms. Kisch was organizing the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County, now the Fair Housing Center of Southeastern Michigan. This year (2012) the FHC of Southeastern Michigan celebrated twenty very productive and effective years of service, with Pam Kisch as its first and only Executive Director. A graduate of the University of Michigan with a Bachelors Degree in Social Science and a Master of Social Work Degree, Ms. Kisch has helped to make Ann Arbor and Southeast Michigan a more diverse and welcoming region. Marv Thomas was always proud of the work done by Ms. Kisch.

Sponsors for the 15th Awards Reception currently include:

- Caise Associates - Bronze
- Century 21, Curran & Christie - Patron
- Comerica Bank - Bronze
- Detroit Metropolitan Apartment Association - Patron
- Flagstar Bank - Gold

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## Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit

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### LEADERSHIP AWARDS RECEPTION *(continued from page 3)*

Green Hill Apartments - Patron  
Group Five Management - Patron  
Huntington National Bank - Patron  
Huntington Management Company - Patron  
Independent Management Services - Bronze  
Lautrec, LTD - Silver  
L R Management - Bronze  
Michigan Association of Realtors - Bronze  
Michigan State Housing Development Authority - Silver  
Miller Canfield Paddock & Stone - Bronze  
North Oakland County Board of Realtors - Patron  
Pearl Insurance - Patron  
PNC Financial Services - Bronze  
Presbyterian Villages of Michigan - Bronze  
Real Estate One - Patron  
River Bend Apartments - Patron  
Southeast Michigan Coalition for Fair Housing and  
Equal Opportunity - Gold  
Unified Property Group - Bronze  
Village Green Management - Bronze  
Wood Kull Herschfus Obee & Kull - Bronze

The FHCMD welcomes sponsors for the event at the following levels:

**Gold Sponsor: \$5,000**  
**Silver Sponsor: \$2,500**  
**Bronze Sponsor: \$1,000**  
**Patron: \$500**

For additional information about the Reception, please contact Bea Paige or Cliff Schrupp at the FHCMD office: 313-963-1274 or fhcdet2@yahoo.com.

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### FHCMD ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 25, 2012

The following serves as the official announcement from FHCMD Board Chairperson, Attorney Noel J. Saleh, of the FHCMD annual General Membership Meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 25, 2012. The annual meeting is held to elect members to the FHCMD Board of Directors and to receive and review various program and financial reports. The meeting will be held, beginning at 5:30 PM, in 10th floor Conference Room down the hall from the FHCMD office in the old Michigan Theater Building at 220 Bagley in Detroit. The meeting will conclude by 7:30 PM. If you let the FHCMD staff know in advance that you plan to attend, free parking in the Michigan Building's parking garage can be arranged (phone 313-963-1274). There is no charge to attend the meeting (light refreshments will be served) however, voting on FHCMD matters is limited to FHCMD members (Individual Memberships, \$15/year; Organizational Memberships, \$50/year.)

### ANGELA DAVIS TO SPEAK IN DETROIT OCTOBER 24, 2012

Some of the younger readers of the *Fair Housing News* may not remember, or have not even learned about the important role that Professor Emeritus Davis played in the struggle for racial and economic justice in the 1970s, and continues to play today.

A broadly based coalition of community and civil rights leaders have come together to form the "Detroit Welcomes Angela Davis" committee to plan a large rally in continuing support of her efforts for racial and economic justice. The rally will be held on Wednesday, October 24 (7-9pm) at Fellowship Chapel, 7700 W. Outer Drive in Detroit. Tickets, beginning at \$50/person, are available from the "Detroit Welcomes Angela Davis" committee at P.O. Box 442381, Detroit, Michigan 48244, or by contacting Michael Olshan, J.D., for ticket information at the FHCMD office (313-963-1274 or at fhcdet2@yahoo.com).