

CRC

Community Focus



JANUARY 2012

COLUMBUS COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR NAPOLEON A. BELL



For many years the City of Columbus's Community Relations Commission proudly hosted the observance and celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. honoring his legacy and the civil rights movement. The CRC coordinates a wide range of educational programs, including a MLK Oratorical Contest, MLK Arts Contest and a ceremonial march from City Hall to Veterans Memorial commemorating the march across the Edmund Pettus bridge. A free theatrical program immediately follows after the march. The celebrations end in April with a 5 day Civil Rights Heritage Tour retracing the steps of our heroes through Cincinnati, Atlanta, Selma, Montgomery, Tuskegee and Memphis. For more information regarding the civil rights tour contact our office at (614) 645-1993.

This is a time for our City and Nation to reflect on the values of racial equality and nonviolent social change spearheaded by Rev. Dr. Martin L. King Jr. and the civil rights movement. Let's remember the efforts that made to make this world a better place for all regardless of their race, ethnicity or economic status.

As our City continues to grow and become more diverse we need to be vigilant in eradicating racism and discrimination whereby making Columbus the best place to live, work and raise a family.

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COMMISSIONER PROFILE

Alan K. Nevel is currently Director of Diversity & Inclusion for Limited Brands, a Columbus, Ohio based leader in specialty fashion retail. His primary focus is to enable business leaders to leverage the power of diverse talent, backgrounds and experiences to drive speed, productivity, innovation and growth. Alan is also responsible for helping to drive enterprise diversity and inclusion initiatives associated with talent, diversity and inclusion education, associate engagement, community & philanthropic involvement, and supplier diversity.

A member of the Commission since 2010, Alan also serves on the Executive Committee as Vice Chair.

After relocating to Columbus from Cleveland in 2004, Commissioner Nevel has been actively involved in the community through his participation in the African American Leadership Academy, Central Ohio Diversity Consortium, OHIO Latino Talent & Leadership Conference, United Way of Central Ohio Key Club, United Way Young Leadership Group, and the OSU Annual National Conference on Race, Diversity & Learning.



SALUTING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**POVERTY SIMULATION Friday, January 27, 2011 10:00 AM – 2:00 pm****1111 East broad street (Enter through the front doors) What is a poverty simulation?**

The Poverty Simulation is a unique, interactive experience that helps individuals begin to understand what life is like with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress. It moves people to think about the harsh realities of poverty and talk about how our community can address the problem collectively.

How does the poverty simulation work?

In the simulation, 44 to 80 participants assume the roles of up to 26 different families facing a variety of challenging, but typical circumstances. Some are homeless, others have recently become unemployed, and some are suddenly faced with the responsibility of raising grandchildren.

In addition, about 20 volunteers play the roles of resource providers, such as social workers, loan officers, employers, pawnbrokers, grocers, utility collectors, police officers and teachers.

To start the simulation, each family and individual is given a card explaining its unique situation and a small amount of “money”. It is then the families or individuals task to provide for food, shelter, and other basic necessities by accessing the various resources during the course of four 15 minute “weeks”.

The FREE activity lasts approximately 3 hours and includes an introduction and debriefing for participants to share their experience. Immediately following the debriefing LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED!

Call 645-1950 if you are interested in participating. Space is limited!

**Collaborated by The City of Columbus Community Relations Commission &
Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks**

EDUCATE • INSPIRE • EMPOWER**Celebrate the Legacy: Getting On the Bus**

January 16, 2012

CEREMONIAL MARCH

City Hall Parking Garage: 90 West Broad Street 4:00 PM

CELEBRATION PROGRAM

Veterans Memorial 300 West Broad Street 5:45 PM

Live Production: Broadcast on CTV Columbus Television

Free to the Public

hosted by



Michael B. Coleman, Mayor



Community Relations Commission

CIVIL RIGHTS TODAY BY NELSON HEWITT

Today's Civil Rights scene is changing and expanding. These changes seem to be taking place as civil rights legends like Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, native of Birmingham, who also served many years in the Cincinnati area, pass from the scene. He and other contemporary civil rights leaders like Cincinnati Marian Spencer, Rev. Andy Young and Rev. Joseph Lowery are celebrating their lifelong civil rights achievements as "New Americans", immigrants and refugees from all over the world have come to the U S and Central Ohio laying claims to human and civil rights. The Occupy Wall Street

Movement, an American economic class protest, even has an Occupy Columbus affiliate.

The list of new groups who are vying for civil, human and economic rights, and their use of Civil Rights styled protests, has proven the success of the Civil Rights Movement. Some of the groups with civil rights histories may legitimately cry "hey, we haven't gotten all of our rights yet." However, there is no stopping the unquenchable desire of various groups to escape the oppression that stubbornly remains in this world.



We will now address the question, "who can file a complaint of discrimination in Columbus?" and what are the requirements to file?

Columbus Code Chapter 2332.05 begins, "Whenever it is charged in writing, by a person or aggrieved organization, hereinafter referenced to as "complainant." A "person" is defined in 2331.01 as including "one or more individuals, partnerships, associations, organizations, corporations, legal representatives, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers and other organized groups of persons." It also includes, "but is not limited to, any owner, lessor, assignor, builder, manager, broker, sales person, agent, employee, lending institution; and the City of Columbus, and all political subdivisions, authorities, agencies, boards and commissions."

So, the above listed individuals or groups can complaint, or be complained against. In the employment discrimination area a business must be within the city limits of Columbus, employ four persons, none of whom are in domestic service. The term "public accommodations" includes any place of business in Columbus open to the public, including private clubs with more than 200 members. However, religious institutions are exempted from this Columbus law. Housing discrimination includes any agent, salesman or broker working for an owner or owners.

Persons can file a complaint online at our website, www.crc.columbus.gov or call us at 614-645-1993 to receive a hard copy of the complaint form. The Columbus Code requires that the complaint be filed within six months of the alleged incident. Please note that the complainant must supply the evidence (documents, electronic media, witnesses, similarly situated persons, policies, and etc.) to support a charge, not just have the belief or feeling that discrimination has occurred. Many cases are closed due to insufficient evidence.

Next time we will describe the complaint process, the role of the Commission and the Columbus City Attorney, who may prosecute those who are charged with discrimination.

CRC SERVICES AND SIGNATURE EVENTS *BY NEAL SEMEL*

The City of Columbus Community Relations Commission is directed to provide leadership to the people of Columbus toward educating about cultural diversity. This important charge is at the heart of all we do at the CRC and takes a myriad of forms from classroom trainings to special events and even a historic civil rights tour of the Southern United States.

The CRC offers a number of training topics and will customize topics to meet the needs of the customer. Each section of the CRC is available to educate about their respective areas including civil rights, New Americans and community outreach. Additionally, the CRC offers cultural awareness training to all city departments as well as outside groups, agencies and businesses. These interactive trainings cover such areas as defining diversity, change, civil rights compliance, immigrant issues and the ABCs of CPD.

Throughout the year the CRC hosts Lunch and Learn forums. These are educational community forums where an assembled panel of experts discuss issues affecting our community and answer audience questions about these issues. Forums topics have included homelessness, re-entry, mental health and hate crimes. Forums can be attended live, or seen broadcast on CTV3.

In addition to our signature events including the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King March and Celebration, and Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance) observance, the CRC hosts the Civil Rights Historic Heritage Tour. This year the tour will be from April 10-14, and include stops in Atlanta, Tuskegee, Montgomery, Birmingham and Memphis.

Please contact the CRC at 645-1993 or via the web at CRC.columbus.gov and allow us to be an education resource to you. Whether you are interested in our Civil Rights Historic Heritage Tour, Community Forums or classroom training, let CRC meet your Diversity educational needs.

STATE ON THE SPOT -ALBANIA-

The Southeastern Europe –Republic of Albania is in the region known as Balkans. Albania has one of the longest history in Europe as part those European countries that were under the Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire, being independent republic and also under monarchy. During the second world war, Albania was divided by Fascists and Nazis and later became a Communist Albania. The vibrant nation of Albania was bon in 1991.

Country: Albania

Geography: Southeast Europe

Population: 3 million

Capital: Tirana

Language: Albanian (Tosk dialects), Kreek, Vlach, Romani, and Slavic dialects

Religion: Muslim 70% Albanian
Orthodox 20% Roman Catholic 10%

Independence: November 28, 1912 from the Ottoman Empire

Government: Democracy

Albania is bordered by Montenegro to the northwest, Kosovo to the northeast, the republic of Macedonia to the East, and to Greece to the south and southeast. It has a coast on the Adriatic Sea to the west, and on the Ionian sea to the southwest.

For more information, please contact New American Initiative at (614) 645-1995



GOING GLOBAL WITHOUT GETTING OUT OF TOWN BY *GUADALUPE VELASQUIZ*

With our city’s bicentennial now underway I wanted to take time to reflect on how Columbus has truly grown into a Global twenty first century city.

In review Columbus was visited by an array of international representatives from all over the world in 2011. Whether it was Amy Camacho, Secretary of Environmental Sustainability and Territorial Planning of the State of Puebla, Mexico or the former prime mister from Somalia, a prince from Nigeria, or a delegation from China, All of them came to Columbus, Ohio with a significant purpose of seeing what we are doing in central Ohio and to share best practices.

What does this mean for our city? First it shows that we are in fact a Global City, a destination for cultural entertainment, food and research. In true Columbus tradition we saw a variety of festivals and events that celebrate every aspect of culture, and the best part is that it happens all year long. Starting in January when we celebrate the Los Reyes Magos (the Three Kings Day), the Chinese and Korean New Year with traditional banquets & meals. Throughout the year we recognize Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in addition to Hispanic Heritage Month, Somali Independence Day weekend, and the Indian festival. If you haven’t been to the Indian Festival, which occurs every September; you are really missing out on the best Central Ohio has to offer in Indian cuisine, performing arts, and market place shopping.

So make it a point to attend and participate in the many cultural experiences Columbus has to offer this year. You may find yourself standing in a long line behind tourists who have made Columbus their destination to enjoy the new American cultural experience that is a part of Global Columbus. 2012 is going to be an exciting year and what YOU do to participate in it, will make up your reality.

COLUMBUS TV WEEKLY PROGRAMS BY COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

Columbus Global

Hosted by Guadalupe Velasquez & Abdikhayr Soofe airs live 1st Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm.

This program covers local & global issues and events affecting our refugees and immigrants communities

Community Tapestry

Hosted by Director Napoleon Bell and Toni Teague airs live on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm. This program covers local community issues, information about local services, provides networking opportunities and inspirational stories.

Diversity in Central Ohio

Hosted by Nelson Hewitt and Neal Semel airs live 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm. This program covers issues of diversity education, civil rights information & mediations

ABC's of CPD and CFD

Hosted by Director Napoleon Bell airs Live the 4th Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm. Deputy Chief Jeff Blackwell of Columbus Police and Lt. David Sawyer of Columbus Fire answer questions of the public about "Why the police and fire department do what they do."



Michael B. Columbus, Mayor

**COLUMBUS COMMUNITY RELATIONS
COMMISSION**

1111 EAST BROAD ST.
SUITE #302
COLUMBUS, OH 43205
OFFICE : (614) 645-1993

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- NELSON HEWITT,
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST
- NEAL SEMEL,
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST AND
EDUCATION COORDINATOR
- GALE GRAY,
OUTREACH COORDINATOR

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT BY GALE GRAY

“Community Highlight

The Community Relations Commission staff was looking for a great hands-on team-building experience that would benefit our community. We found the perfect opportunity at the Furniture Bank of Central Ohio. Thanks to generous donations by Sauder Woodworking (providing materials),volunteers like us can work together to assemble, sand, and paint kitchen tables and other furniture items from kits. **No experience required (this is a fact)** – they provided the instructions, tools, and safety equipment!

With our great volunteer teacher, Jeff Blackburn we all worked on furniture items. Two Ladies from BMW Financial joined us to make a difference. Neal was responsible for making table legs using the biggest power tool, an air hammer. Karen and Abdi made 2 kitchen tables. Director Bell used the router saw and cut out table tops. Gale and Victoria from BMW made 4 end tables. We were productive and made furniture for individuals and families in need.

It was very interesting when we arrived to see all of the furniture in the warehouse available for families to pick up and to be delivered. After working for 3 hours it was amazing how much furniture had left the space.

If you are interested in volunteering please Email volunteer@furniturebankCOH.org or call Sean Becker at 614-272-9544 x212 for more information. Individuals, families, groups (corporate, church, high school, etc.)

The Furniture Bank of Central Ohio also will pick up your gently used furniture at no cost. Just give them a call!

If anyone has other ways for citizens to give back to the community we would like to highlight the information in this newsletter. Please send the information to gagray@columbus.gov



SOCIAL NETWORKING

