



# FAIR HOUSING NEWS

A newsletter about fair housing, community development, & neighborhood quality of life

## SPRING GREETINGS!



Welcome to this Edition of *Fair Housing News*  
Produced by the GBCHRB as a Public Service!

Join the mailing list: <mailto:wkladky@gbchr.org>.

Check out our website <http://www.gbchr.org> for laws, links, etc. See our TV show on the YouTube

Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/wkladky1>!

Or <http://www.gbchr.org/2rad9899.htm> for radio

shows on Fair Housing, affordable housing, community, accessibility...

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## MARYLAND NEWS



**The Maryland Hate Bias Reporting Forum will be June 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Presented by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and the Maryland Office of the Attorney General, the Hate Bias Reporting Forum will provide community members and law enforcement with information related to the 2022 Hate Bias Report. The forum will engage local law enforcement,

elected officials, and community leaders in discussions and information sharing on methods to facilitate more effective reporting as well as responding to bias incidents and hate crimes. The Forum will be held on the campus of Harford Community College, Edgewood Hall, 401 Thomas Run Road, Bel Air, MD 21015. Please take a few moments to complete the registration. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED TO ATTEND!**

### Study Confirms Maryland Has Shortage of Affordable Housing Units.

*The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes* study by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) has found that across Maryland, there is a shortage of rental homes affordable and available to extremely low income households, whose incomes are at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income. Many of these households are severely cost burdened, and spend over half of their income on housing. Severely cost burdened poor households are more likely than other renters to sacrifice other necessities like healthy food and healthcare to pay the rent, and to have unstable housing situations like evictions. "Cost Burden" is defined as spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs. "Severe Cost Burden" is spending more than 50% of household income on housing costs. Regarding Maryland, the study found that 197,310 or 26% of Maryland renter households are extremely low income. The state has a shortage of 134,192 rental homes affordable and available for extremely low income renters. \$37,740 is the average income limit for 4-person extremely low income household. \$64,642 is the annual household income needed to afford a



two-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent. 73% of extremely low income renter households have a severe cost burden. [Read the NLIHC study's Maryland profile.](#)



**Baltimore Civil Rights Week 2024 will be October 6-12, 2024. Call for Presenters.** Proposals are due May 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 p.m. Submit your proposal to <https://forms.office.com/g/39LGUWHxtE>. This year, the Baltimore City Office of Equity and Civil Rights is excited to be hosting the 5th annual Civil Rights Week (October 6th - October 12th) here in Baltimore to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the historic signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Week is a series of FREE events which bring together academics, policy makers, service providers, activists, grassroots leaders, and members of all types of communities in our city together. Governor Moore has declared 2024 to be "The Year of Civil

Rights". With the same energy and spirit, we are happy to share that our theme for Civil Rights Week 2024 will be "From Protest to Progress!" You can follow the links below to learn more about the different divisions that make up OECR and how your proposal can tie into some of the amazing work they do: -[Police Accountability Division](#). [Wage Commission](#). [Women's Commission](#)' [Commission on Disabilities](#). -[Equity Division](#). [Community Relations Commission](#). If you require accommodations or other assistance to submit a proposal, contact Jumel Howard at [jumel.howard@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:jumel.howard@baltimorecity.gov) for further assistance. Proposal topics should be relevant to the main theme of the week, "From Protest to Progress," and should be focused on the local Baltimore (City and/or County) area and how equity, civil rights, and inclusion in process have evolved in Baltimore between the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and today. Activists, service providers, policy makers, scholars, clients, artists, and other Baltimore-based change-makers are all welcome as potential panelists!

## NATIONAL NEWS

### HUD Launches Website to Combat Source of Income

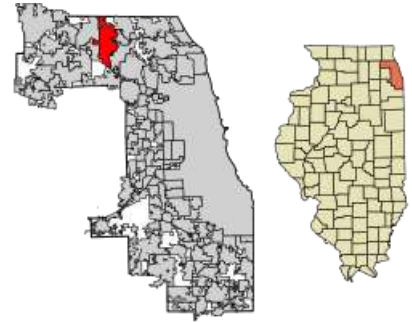
**Discrimination for Families Using Housing Vouchers.** HUD's new website details protections against Source of Income (SOI) discrimination for families with Housing Choice Vouchers

(HCVs). SOI discrimination is the practice where landlords, owners, and real estate brokers refuse to rent to current or prospective qualified tenants with an HCV or other forms of public assistance. The [Source of Income Protections website](#) serves as a "one-stop shop" that summarizes existing materials to explain what SOI discrimination looks like, identifies states and local jurisdictions that prohibit it, and provides resources for people who may have experienced this form of discrimination. HUD launches this resource in alignment with the principles laid out in the [Biden-Harris Administration's Blueprint for a Renter's Bill of Rights](#), and when lower income families face challenges finding safe, quality, and affordable housing. HUD is dedicated to ensuring that families with Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) have access to the housing and neighborhoods of their choice. SOI discrimination can, and often does, include other policies or practices that impact a potential renter's ability to attain housing using vouchers. In states and jurisdictions covered by existing SOI protections, refusal to accept vouchers and other public assistance to pay rent, or adding additional requirements, can constitute as a form of housing discrimination. Thus, enforcing these protections is a critical component to ensuring people have fair access to the rental market. [Read the March 13, 2024 HUD press release.](#)



**Evaluation of 50 Years of Exclusionary Zoning Litigation Finds Progress - and Disappointment.** Robert G. Schwemm has published in the UIC Law

Review - (37:3): 390-456 - an historical review of the Arlington Heights cases and the ongoing legal barriers to address metropolitan issues. He also is author of the encyclopedic standard *Housing Discrimination: Law and Litigation* (West Group, 2001 and updated annually by Clark Boardman Callaghan). Arlington Heights was an exclusionary zoning case, the most important of many such cases brought in the 1970s that challenged local land-use practices blocking subsidized housing projects for racial minorities who were underrepresented in the area. 1968 passage of the FHA stimulated much of this type of litigation. Since then, many exclusionary zoning cases have been filed, and, as the Supreme Court noted in 2015, they make up the basis of this type of FHA claim. In the 50 years since the case, the Village of Arlington Heights has become a more diverse and welcoming community that recently elects Democratic candidates. But residents of these type of "high-opportunity" communities have generally continued to oppose any subsidized housing projects. Exclusionary zoning remains a battleground today, as occasional FHA-based actions generally have failed - and continue mostly to fail - to overcome more powerful social and economic forces that encourage affluent suburbs to use zoning to exclude affordable housing. There have been positive developments since the case that could influence future desegregation. The link between where you live and your financial, social, and medical life chances has been solidly established by much research. Also, bans on "source-of-income" discrimination have been added to many state and local fair housing laws that the majority of Americans now live in jurisdictions with such a ban. Though mainly designed to guarantee voucher-holders access to more rental opportunities, these source-of-income laws have also been used to challenge exclusionary zoning. Source: April edition of *Poverty & Race* by the [Poverty & Race Research Action Council](#) (PRRAC).



**The National Low Income Housing Coalition’s 2024 Housing Study Finds Serious Affordable Housing Shortage.** The Key national finding of the NLIHC's study [The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes](#) is that no state has an adequate supply of affordable rental housing for the lowest-income renters and the nation has a shortage of 7.3 million rental homes affordable and available to renters with extremely low incomes (incomes at or below either the federal poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income, whichever is greater). Only 34 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. Other key findings are: (1) The shortage of affordable rental housing primarily impacts renters with extremely low incomes. Extremely low-income renters in the U.S. face a shortage of 7.3 million affordable, available rental homes, resulting in only 34 affordable, available homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. (2) The shortage of affordable rental housing is more acute than before the pandemic. Between 2019 and 2022, the shortage of affordable and available rental homes for extremely low-income renters increased by more than 480,000. (3) Black, Latino, and Indigenous households are disproportionately extremely low-income renters and disproportionately impacted by this shortage. Some 19% of Black non-Latino households, 16% of American Indian or Alaska Native households, and 13% of Latino households are extremely low-income renters, compared to only 6% of white non-Latino households. (4) Extremely low-income renters are more likely than other renters to spend a large part of their income on rent. A total of 87% are cost-burdened with 74% are severely cost-burdened. Extremely low-income renters are almost a quarter of all renters, but 44% of all cost-burdened renters and 69% of severely cost-burdened renters.

According to this NLIHC study, “historic drivers of housing inequity include decades of racial discrimination by real estate agents, banks, insurers, and the federal government have made



homeownership difficult to obtain for people of color. Many factors kept people of color (POC) from being able to purchase homes through the 1950s: the pervasive refusal of whites to live in racially integrated neighborhoods, physical violence targeting POC who tried to integrate (which was often tolerated by police), restrictive covenants outlawing home sales to Black buyers to integrate neighborhoods, and federal housing policy that denied borrowers access to credit in minority neighborhoods (Massey & Denton, 1993; Coates, 2014; Rothstein, 2017). Being denied the ability to purchase homes meant that POC did not benefit from the appreciation in home value, a major driver of the racial wealth gap. While overt discrimination was outlawed by the Fair Housing Act of 1968, subtler forms of housing discrimination continue. HUD's fair housing tests in 28 metropolitan areas found that Black homebuyers were shown 17.7% fewer homes than similar white homebuyers (HUD, 2013). More recent fair housing investigations show similar discrimination, including being shown fewer homes and not being given the same information as white buyers (Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, 2018; Choi, Herbert, Winslow, & Browne, 2019). Today's credit scoring system and lending practices also are barriers to POC homeownership (Rice & Swesnik, 2012; Bartlett et al., 2019).” [Go to the NLIHC's The Gap website.](#)

### **Labor, Civil Rights, and Consumer Groups Oppose House Bills That Facilitate Predatory “Fintech” Lending.**

Including the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL), the groups say that the bills before the U.S. House of Representatives Financial Services Committee hide true cost of cash advance apps and erase consumer protections. Dozens of advocacy organizations oppose the “Earned Wage Access Consumer Protection Act” (H.R. 7428) and “The Financial Services Innovation Act” (H.R. 7440). In their letter opposing the cash advance legislation (H.R. 7428), nearly 190 labor, civil rights, consumer and other groups state, in part: “In the guise of offering protections, the bill obscures its true effect: to exempt fintech cash advances from the Truth in Lending Act, to endorse a form of loan that makes workers pay to be paid, and to facilitate new evasions by payday lenders... The bill would obscure the relative cost of these fintech cash advances.... The bill perpetuates the myth that these fintech cash advances are not credit... The bill would undermine or block coming guidance from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)...” In a separate letter opposing the Financial Services Innovation Act (H.R. 7440), which encourages regulatory “sandboxes,” more than 30 consumer advocacy groups state, in part: “This legislation encourages new and unproven companies to evade existing consumer protection laws and regulations.... The end result would be a ‘Sahara desert’ of consumer protections. The proposed application process is wholly inadequate and will result in rubber stamping petitions for approval... Companies would be allowed to force other parties into arbitration... Companies would be granted “get out of jail free” cards by simply filing a petition...” [Read the April 16, 2024 CRL article.](#)



**HUD Holds Fair Housing Month 2024 Opening Ceremony.** HUD's Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity (FHEO) hosted the Fair Housing Month Opening Ceremony on April 11. The Month commemorates the signing of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, and familial status. This year's Fair Housing Month theme, *Fair Housing: The 'Act' in Action*, underscores the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to combating discrimination in housing, protecting fair housing rights for all who call America home, and redressing our nation's past discriminatory policies and practices. Simultaneously, HUD announced its [FHEO Table Talk Series](#), which provides the Agency with the opportunity to strengthen its partnerships with leading community stakeholders and inform HUD's mission to ensure fair housing for all. It was developed in accordance with President Biden's Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government. It covers topics related to fair housing and racial

equity and includes discussions with experts, practitioners, leaders, and social justice activists engaged in work relevant to fair housing opportunities. To learn more or view previously recorded episodes of the FHEO Table Talks Series, please visit [HUD's YouTube channel](#). PAVE website. [HUD Fair Housing Month page](#).

**President Biden directs HUD to lead "...a First-of-Its-Kind Interagency Initiative to Address Inequity in Home Appraisals.** In response, HUD Secretary Fudge, along with Domestic Policy Council (DPC) Director Susan Rice (and now Co-Chair), has established the Interagency Task Force on Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE). [Visit the PAVE website](#).



## HUD & DOJ ENFORCEMENT

**HUD Approves Settlement with Lancaster, Pennsylvania Apartment Providers Resolving Claim of Housing Discrimination.** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Conciliation Agreement under the Fair Housing Act between the Metropolitan Management Corporation and Lancaster Court Associates and a family of former tenants resolves allegations that the housing providers discriminated against the family when terminating their lease because a member of the family had a second child. Under the Fair Housing Acts, it is illegal to discriminate in the sale or rental of housing based on race, color, national origin, disability, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and familial status. The agreement stems from a complaint alleging that Metropolitan Management Corporation and Lancaster Court Associates violated the Fair Housing Act by having an overly rigid occupancy policy that discriminated based on familial status. The complaint alleges that when a baby was born to a family of four, the landlord terminated the family's lease for a two-bedroom unit because of their discriminatory occupancy policy. "No tenant should be subjected to housing discrimination based on their familial status or family status as some call it" said Demetria L. McCain, Principal Deputy Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. "This agreement demonstrates HUD's commitment to enforcing the Fair Housing Act and making sure all families have access to fair and inclusive housing." Under the terms of the agreement, Metropolitan Management Corporation and Lancaster Court Associates will pay \$70,000 to the tenants, attend fair housing training, develop an occupancy policy conforming with the Fair Housing Act, and train their staff on the new occupancy policy. People who believe they have experienced discrimination may file a complaint by contacting HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (Relay) or at [hud.gov/fairhousing](http://hud.gov/fairhousing). [Read the April 29, 2024 HUD press release](#).

**HUD Charges Grapevine, Texas Housing Authority with Disability Discrimination.** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has charged the Grapevine Housing Authority ("GHA"); Jane Everett, Executive Director of GHA; and Bonnie McHugh, Vice-Chair of the GHA Housing Commission, with discriminating against, and failure to provide a reasonable accommodation for a tenant with a disability. [Read the charge](#). The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on disability. This includes prohibiting housing providers from making housing unavailable to persons based on disability. The Act also requires housing providers to make reasonable accommodation when necessary for persons with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their homes. Grapevine is located in northeast Tarrant County in the Mid-Cities suburban region between Dallas and Fort



Worth and includes a larger portion of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport than other cities. The population was 50,631 (2020). HUD's Charge of Discrimination alleges that the Grapevine Housing Authority, Ms. Everett, and Ms. McHugh terminated the lease of a tenant with diabetes following a medical episode caused by his blood sugar levels. They subsequently denied his reasonable accommodation request and continued eviction proceedings against him even after his doctor had provided evidence that his symptoms were managed following a change in medication and purchase of a medical alert bracelet. A US Administrative Law Judge will hear HUD's charge unless any party to the charge elects to have the case heard in federal district court. If a judge finds, after a hearing, that discrimination has occurred, they may award damages to the complainant for his losses as a result of the discrimination. The judge may also order injunctive relief and other equitable relief, to deter further discrimination, as well as payment of attorney fees. In addition, the judge may impose civil penalties to vindicate the public interest. If the federal court hears the case, the judge may also award punitive damages to the complainant. [Read the March 25, 2024 HUD release.](#)



**HUD Charges Luxury Condominium in Puerto Rico with Violating the Accessibility Requirements of the Fair Housing Act.** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has charged the architectural firm, the general contractor, and the owners for failing to design and construct Quantum Metrocenter Condominiums (“QMC”) in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in accordance with the accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act (“Act”) based upon a complaint started by HUD. HUD has also charged some of them with failing to approve a reasonable accommodation request made by two residents due to the inaccessible design and construction features of QMC. [Read the Charge.](#) The Act requires multifamily housing built after March 1991 to have accessible features for people with disabilities. The Act also prohibits discrimination because of disability, including refusing to allow reasonable accommodations that would otherwise permit homeowners with disabilities an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their housing. HUD's Charge of Discrimination alleges that they did not include accessible building entrances on accessible routes, accessible, and usable public and common use areas, usable doors in units, accessible routes in units, accessible thermostats, reinforced walls for grab bars in bathrooms, and usable kitchens and bathrooms for persons with disabilities, especially those in wheelchairs, in the 80-residential unit two-tower buildings. The Charge also alleges they failed to approve a reasonable accommodation request for an accessible parking space. A US Administrative Law Judge will hear HUD's charge unless any party elects to have the case heard in Federal district court. If the Administrative Law Judge finds, after a hearing, that discrimination has occurred, the judge may award damages to the resident for his losses as a result of the discrimination; injunctive relief and other equitable relief to deter further discrimination; payment of attorney fees; and civil penalties to vindicate the public interest. If the Federal court hears the case, the Judge may also award punitive damages to the resident. [Read the April 5, 2024 HUD press release.](#)

**North Carolina Man Sentenced for Racially Motivated Hate Crimes Against Black and Hispanic Men.** A North Carolina man was sentenced yesterday to 41 months in prison and three years of supervised release for committing hate crimes against a Black man and a Hispanic man. Evidence at trial proved that Marian Hudak, 52, willfully intimidated the victims and interfered with their enjoyment of federally protected activities using force or a threat of force because of their race and color. “Racially-motivated acts of violence are abhorrent and unlawful, and have no place in our society today,” said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “This defendant, who harbored the KKK flag and Nazi paraphernalia, carried out hate-fueled attacks on a Black man who was merely driving on a public street and a Hispanic man who simply was trying to live in his



own home. The severe sentence imposed for these vicious hate crimes should send a strong message that perpetrators of hate-fueled violence will be held accountable. The Justice Department is steadfast in its commitment to investigating and prosecuting hate crimes wherever they occur in our country.” Evidence at trial also proved that on Oct. 13, 2022, Hudak encountered J.S., a Black man he had never met before, while they were driving on a public road in Concord, North Carolina. Hudak shouted racial slurs at J.S., told him to “come here, boy,” then got out of his car, punched J.S.’ window multiple times, then chased J.S. home where he continued to shout racial slurs and threatened J.S. Additional trial witnesses testified about other times Hudak shouted slurs at, gave the middle finger to and drove aggressively near other minority motorists. They also testified about a KKK flag, a racist publication, and Nazi memorabilia Hudak kept in his residence. Evidence at trial also proved that on Nov. 27, 2021, Hudak shouted racially charged insults at his next-door neighbor, J.D., a Hispanic man who was enjoying his right to occupy a dwelling. Hudak then attacked J.D. by punching and tackling him, causing J.D. to suffer bodily injury. Other trial witnesses testified about Hudak’s history of social media posts disparaging Hispanic people generally and J.D.’s family specifically and other instances where Hudak intimidated Hispanic people, such as by parking his truck outside of a Hispanic church during worship services and by using derogatory language. The FBI Charlotte Field Office investigated the case. [Read the May 2, 2024 Justice Department article.](#)



## CALENDAR

**The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs will hold a Pride Event “Celebrating Progress and Centering Joy!” on June 6<sup>th</sup>.** This will include a virtual panel discussion, as we celebrate the progress in LGBTQIA+ rights and center joy within the community. To register, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/celebrating-progress-and-centering-joy-tickets-883467985527?aff=oddtcreator>.

**Biennial Civil Rights Gala to be on August 24<sup>th</sup>.** The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights' Biennial Civil Rights & Fair Housing Gala Celebration will be held on August 24, 2024, from 6:00pm to 10:00pm at the Maryland Live! Hotel Ballroom in Hanover, Maryland. This year, the theme is “Celebrating Milestones: Pivotal Moments in History.” The Honorees are Governor Wes Moore, Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Comptroller of Maryland Brooke E. Lierman, Esq., Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown, Superintendent MSP Colonel Roland L. Butler, Jr., and President and CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance Lisa Rice. The Gala will be on Saturday, August 24, 2024 from 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm at the Maryland Live! Hotel Ballroom, 7002 Arundel Mills Circle #7777, Hanover, Maryland 21076.



**The National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC) will be hosting four focused sessions on changes to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) at its 2024 Just Economy Conference.** These sessions will treat recent changes as well as the implications for community development and equity. The four sessions are: (1) The New CRA 101 (ROUND 1) - This session covers the updated CRA, and how CRA can be used to increase affordable housing and small business reinvestment in your communities, including crucial updates to the rule announced in late 2023. (2) The New CRA 101 (ROUND 2) -

Addressing the Climate Crisis through CRA and federal funding. This session will cover climate/weather resiliency projects and priorities, including how best to work with communities to prevent bluelining, a trend where financial institutions withdraw services or increase costs due to

climate change. (3) What's Next with the CRA Final Rule - This session will focus on what's coming next with CRA reform and upcoming opportunities to further shape the development of the new CRA rule. Speakers will be covering topics including: developing a statistical model that identifies markets where all banks are underperforming, best practices for reviewing the impact of community development on neighborhoods, and how the regulators can be proactive in preventing a decline in critical investments. (4) State CRA And Non-Banks - This session will explore how state CRA laws include a review of credit unions and mortgage companies' loans and investments in underserved people and neighborhoods, in addition to banks. Register now.

## FAIR HOUSING RESOURCES



**New FHEO Technical Assistance Available.** The technical assistance materials, resources, and trainings educate housing consumers and providers on their fair housing rights and responsibilities. View all [HUD training opportunities here](#). Click the links below to view these recently developed technical assistance resources: [Assistance Animals and Fair Housing: Navigating Reasonable Accommodations Webinar](#). [Data and Fair Housing Planning: AFFH-T Video Series](#). [Fair Housing Act's Familial Status Protections Webinar](#). [OHC and FHEO Conference - Fair Housing 2021: What Counselors Need to Know](#). [Preventing Sexual and Other Discriminatory Harassment in Housing](#). [Respondent's Obligations Toolkit](#). [LGBTQIA+ Fair Housing Toolkit](#). Visit the [FHEO Outreach Tools page](#) to view and download fair housing materials and resources, including posters, graphics, and Microsoft Teams backgrounds. These materials can be shared with your stakeholders to raise awareness of fair housing rights, educational opportunities, and resources.

**Interested In Fair Housing? Community Development? Insurance? Foreclosure Prevention? Check Out the [GBCHRB's YouTube Channel](#)!** You can watch interviews about insurance, discrimination, affordable housing, Fair Housing laws, disability issues, mortgage lending, and related issues. Our radio shows: <http://www.gbchrb.org/2rad9899.htm>.

**The GBCHRB Distributes Free Fair Housing Brochures, Posters, and Guides.** We have Fair Housing information, brochures, guides, & posters in English, Spanish, Korean, Russian, and for people with disabilities. We also distribute brochures and guides about housing and insurance. 410.357.1219 / <mailto:wkladky@gbchrb.org>.



**What Do You Think of This Newsletter?** Is it good? Bad? How can we improve it? What issues should we cover more? Less? Any good ideas? Tips? Good jokes?! Positive or negative, we want to hear from you! We appreciate constructive criticism! Send comments to <mailto:wkladky@gbchrb.org>.



## REST IN PEACE

**Helena Hicks, Civil Rights Advocate and Lunchroom De-Segregator, 88.** Hicks led a 1950s protest to desegregate the old Read's drug store lunch counter in Baltimore. "We think of our historic personalities primarily as male figures but it really was our amazing women who took up the challenge and were the bedrock of our struggle," said the Rev. Alvin Hathaway, former pastor of Union Baptist Church. "Dr. Hicks stood tall and would never allow



anyone to erase our history. In the early 1950s, when Morgan State University students had sought counter service at the Read's in the old Northwood Shopping Center near the school, a Black waitress served them, but she was immediately transferred to another store. Hicks then was among a small group who successfully challenged the segregation policy at the drug store at Howard and Lexington streets, joined by some Congress of Racial Equality members. The Baltimore sit-ins predated the historic one in Greensboro, North Carolina, by five years. In agreeing to drop the race barrier, Read's was the first chain store with a lunch counter to desegregate in the South. Hicks also ran a daycare business, was a case worker for the old Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare, and later was part of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City. She took on the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners in 2016 in defending Grove Park Elementary/Middle School, where her children attended, against closing. "They wouldn't do this in Roland Park," she said at a school board meeting. "You wouldn't do it anywhere that was white. But you think you can march into a Black community, no matter what it looks like." The school closed in 2018. The Helena Hicks Emancipation School, a monthly speaker series, was named for her at the Billie Holiday Center for Liberation Arts at Johns Hopkins University. [Read the April 24, 2024 Baltimore Sun obituary.](#)



**Dorie Ladner, Civil Rights Advocate, 81.** Ladner joined the civil rights movement as a teenager in Mississippi, braving gunfire, tear gas, police dogs and Ku Klux Klansmen in an undaunted campaign for racial equality. When Emmett Till was lynched in Mississippi in 1955, "I was enraged, but I did not know what to do with that anger. His murder made me aware of my Blackness." On the encouragement of activists including a family friend and local NAACP leader who would later be killed in a KKK

firebombing of his home, Dorie and Joyce Ladner joined a youth chapter of the NAACP in Hattiesburg, Miss., in 1959, when in high school. As students at Tougaloo College, a historically Black school in Jackson, Mississippi, they joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a principal organizer of the civil rights movement. Ladner led marches and sit-ins, mounted voter registration drives, and helped organize events including the 1963 March on Washington. She traveled widely, encouraging Black people to embrace their right to vote. She told one St. Louis crowd that anyone who did not vote "should hang your head in shame," explaining that in the South, "we have been shot at, beaten, cut, and jailed for just trying to register to vote." Ladner was often arrested for her activism, including for demonstrating at the funeral of Medgar Evers, the NAACP leader who was fatally shot outside his home in Jackson on June 12, 1963. She was among the activists who had eaten dinner with him hours earlier. [Read the March 13, 2024 Washington Post obituary.](#)

**William Strickland, Civil Rights Activist and Supporter of the Black Power Movement, 87.**

After first becoming active in civil rights as a Massachusetts high schooler, Strickland was inspired by the writings of Richard Wright and James Baldwin while an undergraduate at Harvard University. Peter Blackmer, a former student who is now an assistant professor of Africology and African American Studies at Eastern Michigan University, said, "He made incredible contributions to the Black freedom movement that haven't really been appreciated," Blackmer said. "His contention was that civil rights wasn't a sufficient framework for challenging the systems that were behind the oppression of Black communities throughout the Diaspora." Strickland joined the Boston chapter of the Northern Student Movement in the early 1960s, providing support to sit-ins and other protests in the South. He became executive director in 1963 and then became a supporter of the Black Power movement, which emphasized racial pride, self-reliance, and self-determination. Strickland also worked alongside his friend Malcolm X, Baldwin, and others in New York on rent strikes, school boycotts and protests against police brutality. He also served 40



years as a professor in the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Strickland continued to speak at conferences, symposia, and events dedicated to passing on stories, lessons, and legacies from the Black Freedom Movement to younger generations. [Read the April 23, 2024 AP News article.](#)

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