HOME’s Annual Meeting Sets Just The Right Tone

By Collin Gehl

On Wednesday, March 28, Housing Opportunities Made Equal held its 49th Annual Meeting at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. The theme this year was Everyone Wins, and the 250 people that attended all felt like winners, as the event was an ideal mixture of entertainment and information. For the first time in several years, the entire annual meeting took place within the main ballroom. The food stations provided for variety and mingling, and garnered rave reviews from attendees.

Auctioneer extraordinaire Cash Cunningham again successfully oversaw the live auction, and the Fund-A-Family campaign. Both of this year’s auctions were a wonderful success, with the Fund-A-Family campaign securing donations totaling $3,195, and the live auction raising an additional $4,000!

As always, the most important aspect of the event was to celebrate the good work that HOME does. In order to help paint the picture of HOME’s important work within the community, Mobility Coordinator Kenneth Gholston told a heartwarming story of frustrated parents desperately trying to make a move in order to provide a better life for their children. Additionally, HOME clients Richard and Latisha were recognized as they expressed their gratitude for the assistance that HOME had given to their families.

(Continued on Page 3)

OUR JOURNEY HOME

By Shannon M. Koehn

Nearly 49 years after Housing Opportunities Made Equal was founded, we moved into our first permanent home on Friday, February 24, 2012. As we saw this onetime dream becoming a reality, we took a moment to pause and reflect on what this meant.

The move, to be quite honest, was layered with challenges. First there was the changing time frame for completion of HOME’s offices—would we move at the end of 2011 or at the beginning of 2012? Operating under a deadline of Thursday, February 23rd the staff began packing with frequent trips to the construction site. From our novice eyes things seemed suspicious; nevertheless we accepted promises and proceeded. We partnered with the amazing team of American Household Moving and Storage of Buffalo and set about leaving our rented third floor industrial loft offices downtown for our newly built home on the northwest corners of Main and Ferry.

Though we were assured that the office space would be ready for delivery and set up of our donated furniture from Integrity Office Supply Solutions, this was sadly not the case: construction was still going on and offices were not carpeted. Not to fear though, our new friends at American Household came to the rescue by storing HOME’s furniture and equipment overnight and storing file boxes for weeks. Needless to say, as we looked around unfinished offices we weren’t completely sure this was the right time.

As donated and new furniture was being set up by our friends from Integrity, HOME faced another challenge—this time it was of a technical nature. Verizon had failed to provide telephone service as scheduled and we were left without phones lines or internet capabilities. We knew we had clients to serve and to be unable to take care of them was frustrating. With the aid of Congressman Brian Higgins, lines were secured (although they would have to be adjusted for a few weeks thereafter) but we were on our way. In the interim, our friends at Comtel extended themselves again and again to help compensate for the failings of another telephone company. Slowly, the finishing touches were put on our offices and our electronic issues were resolved. By Tuesday, February 28th HOME was open for business!

The most exciting thing about our

(Continued on Page 3)
From the Director:  
**WHEN HATE FINDS AN ALLY**

By Scott W. Gehl

Recent events in the City of Jamestown have reminded us of risks run when hate finds an ally.

On April 17, The Jamestown Post-Journal published an editorial criticizing City Council President Gregory P. Rabb for suggesting that one way to inexpensively boost tourism is to promote Jamestown as a destination for couples from adjacent states seeking to take advantage of New York’s marriage equality law.

The Post-Journal wrote: “We all know that there just is no way on earth that people in the city would ever agree to market Jamestown as the gay-marriage capital of New York….It is a waste of time and opportunity given the controversy surrounding same-sex marriage.”

This editorial prompted more than 75 comments—some venomously discriminatory—on the newspaper’s website (which permits anonymous comments) and a startling confrontation with an unknown assailant who verbally attacked Western New York’s only openly gay elected official while he was buying a newspaper on April 20th.

Afterwards Council President Rabb admitted he had never seen such hate in a person’s face before. We had a conversation that afternoon about the price paid by those advocating for civil rights.

Ten days later I drove south on Route 60 to attend a Stand Against Hate rally which drew close to 100 participants to Tracy Plaza in downtown Jamestown—despite a cool wind and threatening sky. The diverse crowd heard a number of speakers, including Susan Meara of the Jamestown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. She said (in part):

> When a newspaper gives up all pretense of journalistic principal to pursue an agenda of promoting its own version of truth—regardless of actual facts, regardless that marriage equality is the law in New York—it becomes directly responsible for fanning the flames of hate.

> We are a firewall. The hate stops here. We are here to demonstrate our support for those who have been made to feel unsafe and unwelcome in their own community.

> Injustice anywhere is a threat to Justice everywhere. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote that as he sat in the Birmingham jail for the crime of organizing mass protests against unconstitutional laws. He believed in our interconnectedness—the thread of humanity that binds all of us together, and the power of people to change their communities and their world, when they stand together as one for that which came before laws: the inherent worth and dignity of every human being.

> And so we stand here today, because we know that silence equals complicity. Whenever human beings are disrespected, tormented, humiliated, threatened or harmed, it is our responsibility to take a side and stand against the perpetrators, to reaffirm the values of our community, to shine a light on that which seeks to damage, divide and destroy us.

> We will not tolerate hate in Jamestown. We will shine light and energy and love on those hearts where hatred lurks. And we will pray that they will be healed, pray that they will find their place of belonging in our human family—where we stand together for the dignity of another.

The struggle for civil rights goes on—in Jamestown, and Buffalo and every community of Western New York.

We are fortunate to have leaders—and role models—like Greg Rabb. Tomorrow I’ll be honored to march with him in Buffalo’s Gay Pride Parade.

**HOME in 2011—by the numbers**

In previous years I have often used this space in the annual report issue of Insight to say a few words about the many HOME has helped in the previous 12 months.

Despite further staff reductions, in 2011 HOME still managed to serve 4,960 individuals—who turned to us to investigate possible discrimination, for information about fair housing law or their rights as landlords or tenants, for counsel and support in moving into an opportunity community, or for help escaping the nightmare of homelessness.

In addition, HOME brought information about fair housing to 4,025 people who attended one of our 195 educational presentations and extended its fair housing message to tens of thousands of other Western New Yorkers through publications and 43 documented media appearances.

By any measure, this was a remarkable accomplishment for a staff which had dwindled to only eight by year’s end.

HOME’s mission is broad, and the demand for our services strong; with few notable exceptions, our funding is not. Therein lies the rub.

**Volunteer Housing Opportunities Made Equal**

HOME is gearing up to begin its strategic planning process and we need your help! If you are a HOME member who is interested in helping shape HOME’s goals for the next three years, please contact Board member Elizabeth Fox-Solomon at efoxsolomon@gmail.

**INSPIRED BY INSIGHT?**

If so, you may be a perfect candidate for HOME’s Board of Directors. For more information, contact Nominating Committee Chair BILL BERRY at (716) 853-3806 x208 or wberry@lsed.org.
move has been the reaction of our clients and neighbors. Clients who remembered struggling to find us at 700 Main were in awe at how welcoming our new, easily accessible office space is. It is absolutely wonderful to be in a modern, airy and light infused work space. The conditions certainly give us that extra bit of inspiration we need as service providers and offer our clients a glimmer of hope for their own situations. We have received countless expressions of gratitude for “doing something positive on this corner…” We have been told by Nick Sinatra of Sinatra Development Company that HOME’s project was the catalyst for his development of market rate apartments and lofts, the Fenton Village, just across West Ferry Street. In our moment of reflection we recall the collaborative effort that made this dream a reality. Nearly all costs of construction of the ten residential units were covered by government funds provided by the State of New York, the City of Buffalo, and the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York (in cooperation with M&T Bank and First Niagara Bank). Meanwhile, the new Home for HOME was made possible by generous philanthropic support provided by the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, the Mulroy Family Foundation, the M&T Bank Foundation, the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, the Western New York Foundation, the Garman Family Foundation, the James H. Cummings Foundation, and nearly 90 individual contributors.

We remain grateful for this opportunity and what it means to assuring the future of Western New York’s premier fair housing agency, providing a bridge between two distinct historic neighborhoods of Cold Spring and Linwood-Oxford, and continuing to advocate for countless housing providers, tenants and homeseekers. Anytime you’re in the neighborhood, we welcome you to stop by for a visit and tour of our new HOME.

To report discrimination, call 716-854-1400.
I have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc., as of December 31, 2011 and 2010, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended. In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc., of December 31, 2011 and 2010 and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the years then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Mark J. Bellanca, CPA, P.C.
Mark J. Bellanca, CPA, P.C.
June 12, 2012

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES MADE EQUAL, INC.
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2011 AND 2010

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>December 31, 2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
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<td>Due from related company</td>
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<td>Total current assets</td>
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<td>651,657</td>
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LIABILITIES AND FUNDS BALANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUND BALANCES</th>
<th>December 31, 2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General funds - unrestricted</td>
<td>$33,913</td>
<td>$33,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program and endowment funds - unrestricted</td>
<td>33,913</td>
<td>33,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total funds</td>
<td>664,057</td>
<td>651,657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See accompanying "Independent Auditor's Report" and Notes to the Financial Statements.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES MADE EQUAL, INC.
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011 AND 2010

1. Organization

Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. ("HO"); was incorporated in 1983 as a non-profit civil rights organization. Since its founding, HO has, in accordance with federal and state municipal fair housing laws, promoted equal opportunity in housing. The organization is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Deemed Income

As of December 31, 2011, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. earned $8,081 in deemed income related to the Town of Hamburg that is to provide services in future years.

3. Fund Release

All funds received from the County of Erie, City of Buffalo, Town of Hamburg, Town of Amherst, the Buffalo Housing Authority and the Community Housing Corporation are related and can only be used for the purpose specified in the contracts associated with these government agencies.

4. Cash

Cash consisting of the following as of December 31, 2011 and 2010:

December 31, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Funds</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Buffalo</td>
<td>$75,723</td>
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<tr>
<td>State of New York</td>
<td>117,610</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cash</td>
<td>$93,333</td>
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</table>

December 31, 2010

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Source of Funds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cash</td>
<td>$93,333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Related party

On January 1, 2012, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. entered into a new lease agreement with the Buffalo Housing Authority for an additional space at 100 Main Street at a cost of $9,000 per month. On October 1, 2012, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. amended its lease to rent additional space at 100 Main Street at a cost of $9,000 per month. On January 1, 2013, HO agreed to lease a total of 9,500 square feet of office space at an annual rate of $42,500.

See accompanying "Independent Auditor's Report."
In the fall of 2010, Regina, a single African American woman, and single mother of a three year old son, found an ad on www.buffalo.craigslist.org for a two bedroom apartment. When Regina called the number on the ad, a man answered the phone. Regina asked if the two bedroom apartment was still available, to which he responded, that it was.

The man then asked Regina who the apartment would be for, and Regina responded that the apartment would be for her, and her son. The landlord then responded that he wouldn’t rent to her, because she had a child, and there were men in the other apartments; he was only interested in renting to bachelors. Regina was shocked and upset. She thanked the man for his time, and hung up the phone. Regina was frustrated not only because was she being denied an apartment, but because she was facing a deadline for her Section 8 housing voucher, and had to find an apartment in the near future.

Regina then remembered that during her Section 8 orientation meeting, someone from HOME had come to talk about housing discrimination and the protections present under the law. Regina also remembered that when a person denies you an apartment because you have children under the age of 18, it’s familial status discrimination.

Regina’s case was filed with the Division of Human Rights where a settlement was reached from the respondent for $1500. With this, Regina able to leave a dangerous situation, and cover her expenses, while she searched for new suitable housing.

By Nichelle Brown

In the fall of 2010, Regina, a single African American woman, and single mother of a three year old son, found an ad on www.buffalo.craigslist.org for a two bedroom apartment. When Regina called the number on the ad, a man answered the phone. Regina asked if the two bedroom apartment was still available, to which he responded, that it was.

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All participants in the Section 8 housing voucher program are encouraged to call HOME if they are ever denied an apartment for any discriminatory or questionable reasons, and Regina did just that. Regina called HOME and had her rights under the fair housing law explained to her. As part of the reporting process, Regina completed a summary of complaint and the client authorization forms that enable HOME to investigate claims of discrimination on the behalf of our clients. HOME’s fair housing coordinator set up a test, which revealed evidence of gender discrimination. The landlord had a desire to solely rent to males.

**TRIBUTE TO TWO GENTLEMEN**

*By Scott W. Gehl*

Dr. Gehl and I were honored to be among those invited to witness the wedding of Donnell G. Mueller and Ron Weekes on a warm Friday evening in mid-May. It was an elegant and moving affair in a private room at Club 31, presided over by Reverend Cam Miller of Trinity Episcopal Church. Before the enactment of marriage equality, this simple ceremony which legally united a loving committed couple would not have been permitted in the State of New York.

But now it is.

Because these two gentlemen already had both a toaster and a blender, they generously asked their guests to consider contributions to either Gay and Lesbian Youth Services or to Housing Opportunities Made Equal. HOME was honored by their thoughtfulness.

All told, the following donors contributed more than $1,400 to HOME’s Tribute Fund—in honor of Donnell and Ron. Our thanks go to: Carol and Eric Streiff, Marvin Henchbarger, Edward Schneider, Chrislan and Warde Manuel, Judy Jewell, Martin and Heather Kling, Guy and Alisa Creighton, Diane Perry Brown, Laura Barnum, Dawn Reed, Jeffrey Marshall, Mary Gresham, Amber Anderson and James Garver.

**Bachelor Apartment**

*By Nichelle Brown*

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAUSE (Donations received 1/1/11 – 1/31/12)

BENEFACOR $5,000+
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; Federal Home Loan Bank NY; Scott and Danis Gehl; HSBC Bank USA; John and Maureen Hurley; Russell Newbert; John R. Oshei Foundation; Josephine Goodyear Foundation; M&T Charitable Foundation; Margaret L. Wendt Foundation; Oxford Consulting

LEADER $2,500 - $4,999
Kathleen Butler; Rita Cazepi and Jeffrey Lowry; Philippe P. Deterville; George and Sally Hezel

PARTNER $1,000 - $2,499
Anthony Baldi; Belmont Housing Resources WNY; Belmont Management Company, Inc.; William Berry and Deborah Seifert; Nancy and John Blaschak; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo (Granger Family); Paul and Leslie Curtin; First Niagara Bank; Friends of Anthony Masiello; Mary Jo Giambelluca; Deborah Goldman and Grant Golden; Arthur and Allison Hyde; Jaecelle Fleischmann & Mugel, LLP; Dan Kohane; Robert Kresse; Lamparelli Construction; Samuel E. Loiger; Sarah Metzger; John Phelan; Sassy Design Group; The Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies; U.C. Coating Corp.; Westside NHS

PATRON $500 - $999
Ansar Group/Duane Madyun; David Banks; Janet Barnes; Anne Bertholf; Buffalo Teachers Federation; Joseph and Diane Butler; Elizabeth Clark; Diana Cooke; Tina Destro; Thomas J. Dolan; Excellus Health Plan; Eugene M. Fahey; Susan Fayle; Richard and Jane Griffin; Kathleen Haggerty; Charles J. Hahn; Heart of the City Neighborhood; Gilbert and Lucille Hernandez; Hodgson Russ LLP; Hurwitz and Fine, P.C.; Todd Joseph; KeyBank N.A.; Shannon M. Koehn; Law Office of Lindy Korn; Richard H. and Mary A. Lesniak; Kenneth McClane and Rochelle Woods; North Presbyterian Church; Realty USA Company; Rich Products; Thomas Rolle; Brenda K. Shelton; Trinity Tower of Buffalo; David and Mimi Wright

FRIEND $250 - $499
Grace Andriette; John and Joan Bozer; Marcus and Margaret D. Brown; Buffalo Niagara Convention Center; Marcia E. Buhl; Child and Family Services; Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled; Delta Development of WNY; Mark and Patricia Evans; Christopher and Brenda Hull; Integrity Office; Norman and Jane Joslin; Kensington Village Associates; Jennifer Metzger Kimura; Laura D. Krolczyk; Richard and Rita Lipsitz; W. Donn McCarthy; Meghan McDonnell; James and Judith Metzger; Minority Bar Association; Andrea Mujahid-Moore; James I. Myers; People Inc.; Jennifer Priore; R&P Oak Hill Development; Gregory Rabb; Michael and Tracy Riegel; Robert Silverman and Kelly Patterson; Alan B. Snitzer; Charles and Karen Thomas

ADVOCATE $100 - $249
Christina Akers; AIDS Community Services; AKA Inc.; Tommie and Susan Alford; Anne Allan; Budd and Jody Bailey; Joan S. Baizer; Bernice P. Bauemler; Froziner Bellamy; Donna Berry; Anne L. Bird; Nichelle Brown; Buffalo Urban League; Wesley Carter; Melissa Cavagnero; Cazenovia Recovery; Chicago Title Insurance Company; Choco-Logo; Committee to Re-Elect Bonnie Russell; Connie Cooke; Ercel Cooke; Gary Crossman; David J. Galbo DBA; George Detitta; Joan Doerr; Ruth Irene Dwigans; E.F. Burke Co., LLC; Susan Eagan; Kenneth and M. DeAnna Eason; Maurice Eason; Deborah S. Ebel; Ellicott Lofts, LLC; Enjoy Journey Art Gallery; Joseph A. Fiorella; FLARE, Inc.; Elizabeth Fox-Solomon and Kevin Purdy; G. Aleyonmark Insurance; Nancy Gara; David Gerber; Kenneth and Kristen Gholston; James Glose and Linda DeTine; Charles J. Glover; Carl and Eloise Granger; John Grieco; Theodore Hamilton; Minnie L. Harris; Williams Hawkes; James and Amy Hecht; Jeri Hill and Brenda McGlaston; Marilyn A. Hochfield; Iovic Asaresky/Royal Printing; Rosemary Jonientz; Steven and Barbara Kagle; Allison Killeen; Candace Kiehn; Ann Krieger; Paul Kurtz; Norma Jean Lamb; Mary Leahy; Richard Leimbach; Tom Lewin; Living Opportunities of DePaul; Bryan Lorenz; Joe and Flora Luppino; William Malldovan; Charles and Izraelat Martin; Sean D. McConnaghy; Gerald and Brenda McDuffie; Frank and Ulicra Mesiah; Jacqueline Milligan; James Morrissey; Donnel G. Mueller; National Gas Distribution; Sanford Nobel; Ken Norman; Rosa Norman; E. Jeanette Ogden; Mary Ostrowski; Crystal Peoples; Thomas V. Potts; Marilyn L. Reeves; Related Management; Religious Society of Friends Buffalo Meeting; Rental Assistance Corporation of Buffalo; Harriet Rosenfeld; Joelle Ruettimann; Robert Russell; Eventy Salis; Samuel Magavera and Monica Angle; Samuel J. Savarino; David C. Schopp; Michael Sexton; Aaron B. Siegel; Jacqueline Simons; James and Heather Siniscalchi; St. Paul’s Church in Buffalo; Deborah Stewart; Austin and Paul Swanson; Talking Leaves ; UB Educational Opportunity Center; David and Susan Udin; Valerie Vance; Yvette Veira; Greg Wadewarth; James M. Wadsworth; Denis J. Woods andileen M. Dooley

SPONSOR up to $99
Charles Adams; Daleylah Al-Haqq; Aaron Bartley; Martin and Esther Bates; Mark J. Bellanca; Benedict House; Bruce and Mary Beyer; Roberta Bothwell; Catherine Braniecki; Lauren Breen; Rachael Brown; Barbara Bunker; Sandra L. Bunkley; Pamela Burger; Bejamin Carlisle; Tidcets Cese; Linda Chiarena; Christopher Chol; Frank and Wilma Cipolla; Pauline and Denise Clay; Marjorie A. Connors; Rosalie Covial; Mamie B. Crawford; Kevin Cummins; James and Deborah Dahlberg; Judith Debacy; Nicole Denico; Salvatore Dicenzo; Bradley J. Dossinger; Anthony Draffin; Murray and Peppy Ettinger; Abel King Fing; James Folan; Mark and Linda Foley; Sarah Galvan; Rebecca Garofaro; Collin Gell; Marjorie Girth; Betty Jean Grant; Esther M. Greene; John and Eileen Grimaldi; Rayna Grossman; Richard Haenggi; Bernadette Harlan; Alvin R. Haven; Paul and Virginia Hebarth; Robert Heffern; Hemphill; Leon and Cecelia Henderson; Amalia Hill; Virginia Hoopengarner; Lorraine Hope; Ahlea Howard; Eddie Howard; Juanita K. Hunter; Jackson Square Associates; Eunice Jackson; Luella Johnson; Joyce Jowdy; KB Landscape and Design; Anthony Keller; Timothy and Ellen Kennedy; Kathy Kurtz; Phillip and Lynn Kwon-Dzikyi; Stephen R. and Ellen S. Lazarus; George R. Levine; Sarah Lewis; Clifford and Ronnie Mahler; James and Audrey Mang; Joseph Masling; Janet Mieselman; Deborah Merrifield; Barbara Mervin; Gregory Metzger; Mid Office Supply; Paula Minkel; Natalie “Ned” J. Mollica; Joel Moore; Michael and Sylvia Moran; Christina Naples; National Fuel Gas Company Foundation; New York’s Health and Human Service Union; Andy Newbert; Niagara Frontier CFC; Susan Nusbaun; Juana Otero; Robert Paternot; Faith Perry; Robert Petersen; George and Elizabeth Phillips; Jennifer Phillips; Deborah Pleskow; Jeffrey Priore; Andrijy Prychlyak; Debberra Ransom; Thomas and Deb Renzi; Gary P. and Anna Marie Richmond; Barbara Ritter; Donald and Joanne Roberson; Michael J. Rogers; Howard and Valerie Rosenhoch; Donald Rosenthal and David Scott; Roger and Charlotte Ross; Tracy Sawicki; Brian Scime; Sharby Eron Shaihied; Kenneth Sherman; Oscar Smukler; Avrom and Viola Sterman; Ruth Kahn Stovroff; T.E. Moore; Hans Tamberlie; Alpaha D. Taylor; Nancy W. Thompson; Roberta Paddock Thompson; William and Patricia Townsend; Laurence Van Heusen and Robert Scharf; Sandra Warker; Alin Wausor; Elizabeth Webster; Claude Welch; Barbara Herrick Wilson; Wayne D. Wisbaum
From the Director:
Know Your HOME Board Members

By Rayna Grossman

HOME operates with the valuable input of a large and diverse Board of Directors, bringing a wide range of community contacts, in-depth knowledge and experience. Whether new to, continuing on, or departing from the board, HOME is grateful to each of them for their service and dedication to fair housing.

OFFICERS 2012 - 2013:
Chair of the Board Mary Jo Giambelluca has been a HOME member since the late 70s. Mary Jo has been an active HOME member, as well as board Secretary. Mary Jo was a founding member of the Erie County Commission on Homelessness, and has held leadership positions at the Network in Aging, and Benedict House.

President Diana Cooke teaches special education at Bennett High School. She has her Masters of Science in special education from D’Youville College. She chairs HOME’s Membership Committee.

Senior Vice President Gilbert R. Hernandez is retired from the NYS Department of Social Services. He is a board member of Hispanic United of Buffalo and Alianza and serves as treasurer at St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral. He is HOME’s 2011 James Crawford Award recipient.

Vice President Janet E. Barnes is a former principal and administrator in the Buffalo Public High Schools. She is a member of The Links, Inc. of Erie County, and plays leadership roles in the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and the National Association of Negro Business & Professional Women’s Clubs.

Secretary Melissa A. Cavagnaro, Esq. is an Associate Attorney with Lipitz Green Scime Cambria, LLP, focusing on matrimonial and family law where she encounters numerous fair housing issues. She holds a BS in Business Administration and a BA in Communication from Alfred University and is a graduate of the University at Buffalo Law School.

Treasurer Philippe P. Deterville is the Vice President of Community Development at HSBC Bank. He has served on the Boards of the Erie County Fair Housing Partnership and HomeFront, Inc. He received HOME’s Director’s Award for Distinguished Service in 2010 and serves as chair of HOME’s Development and Finance Committees.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS:
Lynn M. Kwon-Dzikiy, Esq. is the Lead Associate Attorney with Bernhardi & Lukasik, PLLC, focusing on Social Security Disability. She also serves as the chair of the Committee for the Disabled of the Bar Association of Erie County.
Ellary Mori holds a BA in Sociology from Ithaca College, and a Masters in Urban Planning from the University at Buffalo. She works for the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning as a Housing Specialist.

CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS:
Christina Akers holds a Masters in Urban Planning from the University at Buffalo, and is pursuing her law degree at the University of Buffalo. She is an active member of HOME’s Membership Committee.
Grace Andriette, Esq. is the Supervising Attorney of the Housing Unit at Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. She was a contributor to A Guide of Landlord Rights, and is a member of the Erie County Fair Housing Partnership.
William W. Berry, Esq. served as co-chair of the Inclusion Task Force. He is currently chair of HOME’s Nominating Committee and Supervising Attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly in Buffalo, where he specializes in Medicare, Medicaid, health insurance and disability discrimination issues.

Nancy M. Blaschak has been Executive Director of the American Red Cross Greater Buffalo Chapter for 20 years. She currently serves on the board of Consumer Credit Counseling Service. Nancy is an adjunct professor at Canisius College, Department of Communications and Leadership.
Paul B. Curtain, Esq. is a Staff Attorney in the Civil Unit at the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, dealing with many landlord/tenant issues. He’s served as a Public Defender in Buffalo Housing Court. He has a strong interest in resolving housing and employment issues for ex-offenders re-entering the community.

Tina M. Destro is a Branch Relationship Banker with First Niagara Bank. She holds a BA in Journalism from Buffalo State College and a Master’s Degree in Professional Leadership from St. Bonaventure University.
Thomas J. Dolan is a distinguished former reporter for The Buffalo News. His honors include the Nieman Fellowship (Harvard University), and Distinguished Urban Journalism Award (National Urban Coalition).

Elizabeth Fox-Solomon, Esq. is the confidential law clerk to a State Supreme Court Justice. She chairs HOME’s Program Operations and Planning Committee, and was recently elected to the Board of the WNY Chapter of the Women’s Bar Association. Elizabeth also sits on the Board of the UB Law GOLD group.
Kathleen M. Haggerty is a Senior Property Manager with the Related Companies, working locally at the Marina Vista Apartments. She is a licensed Real Estate Salesperson with Nothnagle Property Center.

Dan D. Kohane, Esq., a senior partner at Hurwitz & Fine, P.C., has served on the board since 1986 and now is counsel to the board. He was awarded the Director’s Award for Distinguished Service in 1989, the James Crawford Award in 1993 and the Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award in 2000.
Laurie Krzolczyk is the Director of Government & Community Affairs for Roswell Park Cancer Institute and is a graduate of Buffalo State College. She has served as Western New York Regional Director for both New York’s United States Senators Hillary Clinton and Kirsten Gillibrand.

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Samuel E. Loliger is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Niagara County Community College. He is the NYS Coordinator for United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns, and is a consultant to UCC's Open and Affirming Program. He serves as President of Opera Buffs of WNY and Chair of HOME's Anniversary Celebration Committee.

Duane M. Madyun is President of the Ansar Group, a financial services firm providing merchant services to small businesses. Duane studied business administration at Buffalo State College.

Robert M. Silverman, PhD., is an Associate Professor at the University at Buffalo Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning. He conducts research projects on fair and affordable housing and social justice issues. He co-authored the study Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in Erie County, NY.

Executive Director Scott W. Gehl is an ex officio member of HOME's board. A former community organizer and Buffalo Councilman, Gehl received the first Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award, HUD's Pioneer of Fair Housing Award, and the Erie County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award.

DEPARTING BOARD MEMBERS

Daleylah D. Al-Haqq holds a Masters in Urban Planning from the University at Buffalo. She divides her time between grant research/writing and project management. Before she moved from New York State, she also served on the boards of Urban Roots, West Side Housing Partnership and Erie County Fair Housing Partnership and represents the Ellicott District as a Housing Court Liaison.

Susan M. Fayle is Executive Director of Trinity Tower of Buffalo, Inc. She has worn many hats for HOME, having served as Chair of the Board from 2002-2004, as well as Treasurer. Sue Fayle was a recipient of HOME’s highest honor, the James Crawford Award.

John Grieco is an employee of the Erie County Department of Mental Health, who served as a member of HOME’s Program Operations & Planning Committee.

Debbera M. Ransom was the first female commander of the Jessie Clipper American Legion Post 430 and simultaneously, the President of the Auxiliary at the American Legion Bennett Wells Post No 1780.