

INSIGHT

Western New York's Source for Fair Housing News

VOLUME 45 NO. 2

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES MADE EQUAL 700 Main Street Buffalo NY 14202

Summer 2008

Vote of Confidence for the Community Housing Center

By Scott W. Gehl

The John R. Oishei Foundation has given a resounding vote of confidence to HOME's Greater Buffalo Community Housing Center. The \$300,000 grant—the largest foundation grant ever received by HOME—will permit the expansion of this proven housing mobility program which had faced an uncertain future.

Created by consent decree

The Community Housing Center was borne out of the resolution of 1989 class-action suit *Comer v. Kemp* which challenged the way a variety of government housing programs had been administered. One of the remedies provided was an allocation of 1600 additional Section 8 rental assistance vouchers for non-white and Latino residents.

Plaintiffs' counsel also pressed for creation of a new program so that minority voucher holders would not be consigned to neighborhoods characterized by concentrated poverty and racial segregation. After a national search, Housing Opportunities Made Equal and the Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers were chosen to administer the program, which was to be supported by \$3.5 million from the settlement. BFNC continued as a partner through 2003.

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Kensington Village Settlement Assures Equal Opportunity

Housing Opportunities Made Equal and three of its clients have resolved four related federal discrimination cases filed in response to the plans of Affinity Renewal Development LLC to create a gated community of student housing on the site of the Kensington Village Apartments.

As reported in the last issue of *Insight*, Kensington Village is a 928 unit complex extending from Buffalo into the Town of

Cheektowaga. The settlement, which did not constitute any admission of wrongdoing, also included related companies Ken-Vil Associates Limited Partnership and Renewal Housing Corporation.

Origins of the case

HOME began an investigation into plans to redevelop the 60 year-old complex in April of 2007 because of concerns that the proposal would have a disparate impact on families with children, older households and African-Americans, who would be displaced

from one of Cheektowaga's most racially diverse census tracts.

In August, HOME brought its concerns to the New York State Division of Human Rights, which began an independent investigation.

On December 19, 2007 HOME

and its clients, African-American college students who were displaced by the student housing development, filed federal discrimination complaints

with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development alleging discrimination due to race, familial status and age. Respondents answered these complaints, denying all allegations contained therein.

Then on December 27, 2007 the State Division of Human Rights followed suit, charging Affinity Renewal and its related companies, Villa Maria College, the Town of Cheektowaga, the Village of Kenmore and the Kenmore Housing Authority with multiple

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Terms of the federal conciliation agreement are wide-ranging.

Reflecting the Past...Envisioning the Future:

Celebrating 45 Years of Service!



"I've been coming to HOME's annual meetings for over 15 years now but this was the most fun!" said Belmont Shelter's Kathy O'Brien. Many guests shared those sentiments. It was indeed an evening of anticipation and excitement. When you walked through the lobby of the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center you knew you were in for an exceptional event. Cocktail hour hosted reunions and mingling and participation in the more than 40 themed gift basket raffles, generously donated

from local businesses and HOME members. The evening's exhilaration, then moving into the grand ballroom, continued as HOME personality Mark Evans and auctioneer extraordinaire Cash Cunningham helped HOME raise thousands of dollars, significant for HOME's very first live auction.

The room hushed as the evening's master of ceremonies, WIVB's news reporter Rob Macko took the stage to introduce HOME's Chair of the Board Janet E. Barnes who reiterated the event's theme and spoke of both HOME's history and future. Guests were reminded that we all must

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A New Presence on the World Wide Web

by Shannon M. Koehn

In this day and age where there are so many different agencies and causes competing for your attention HOME continues to look for ways to cut through the clutter to promote the good and necessary work that we do.

One of the things we are doing to accomplish this goal is to increase our web presence. We are currently working on a Wikipedia entry which will detail the history of HOME, the scope of our comprehensive services and highlight HOME's noteworthy accomplishments.

We will also be entering the realm of social networking sites by creating an entry on both MySpace and FaceBook. These two sites will be used to promote the awareness of fair housing laws. They will also be used as a way to introduce HOME to a younger generation.

The crown jewel of our attempts to broaden HOME's web presence is our new and improved website. Still the same easy to remember URL (www.homeny.org), this site will not only be aesthetically more pleasing but easier to navigate.

At first glance guests are greeted by an open door inviting them in to learn more about the federal and New York State fair housing laws. A new addition to the website will be a section of client testimonials—stories of people who fought back against discrimination with HOME's help.

The website includes helpful information for home seekers and housing providers alike. There is also a Frequently Asked Question and Answer section to help visitors determine if they have been a victim of housing discrimination and a way to contact HOME with questions.

Additionally, helpful links to community agencies, voter

registration forms and a guide to tenant's rights in New York State are provided as links on HOME's new website.

We are exceedingly ecstatic to report that this new website will allow members to join and renew their memberships on-line. Through Groundspring.org, HOME is now able to accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express. In addition to membership contributions, this on-line payment feature can also be used to purchase publications such as the *Guide to Landlord's Rights* as well as tickets to special HOME events.

A Special Thank You goes to volunteer webmaster, Timothy Frawley, for his tireless efforts and many nights away from his family to make this new website a reality.

So, check it out, it's coming soon to a computer near you! Let us know what you think. We would love to hear from you!

INSIGHT

HOME Officers

Janet E. Barnes, *Chair*
 Gilbert R. Hernandez, *President*
 Lance A. Fertig, Esq.,
Senior Vice President
 Diana Cooke, *Vice President*
 Rita A. Capezzi, *Secretary*
 Susan M. Fayle, *Treasurer*

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 Margaret D. Brown, *Secretary*
 Nichelle E. Brown, *Senior Counselor*
 M. DeAnna Eason,
Investigations Coordinator
 Kenneth J. Gholston, *Mobility Coordinator*
 Gwendolyn Neal, *Assistant Secretary*
 Faith Perry, *Bookkeeper*
 Grace Smokowski, *Education Coordinator*

Contributors

Janet E. Barnes, Scott W. Gehl,
 Kenneth J. Gholston,
 Shannon M. Koehn,
 & Grace Smokowski, *Editor*

Kensington Village Settlement

(Continued from Page 1)

violations. Although respondents and the State of New York settled this action in April, HOME and its clients continued their federal action.

Terms of the federal conciliation agreement are wide-ranging:

- √ Reaffirming that housing at Collegiate Village and the adjoining Kensington Village Apartments will be available on an equal opportunity basis;
- √ Broadening eligibility to include students, faculty and staff (family and household members) from any degree or certificate granting post-secondary educational institution;
- √ Assuring that units in the affordable housing section of Collegiate Village will be available to Section 8 voucher holders;
- √ Pledging that housing would be marketed to minority communities and to minority student organizations; and
- √ Providing fair housing training for personnel of the two complexes.

The respondents also agreed to make payments totaling approximately \$57,000. Included in this sum are rent rebates to 106 former residents who lived at Kensington Village 61 months or longer as well as undisclosed payments to the three individual named complainants and to HOME.

HOME Executive Director Scott W. Gehl noted: "Mark Chason and his associates have come forward to address a number of fair housing concerns—in the process creating a development which will contribute positively to our region."



Annual Meeting and Dinner ...*(Continued from Page 1)*

become the new faces of civil rights and as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. so eloquently said "the failures of our past must not be an excuse for the inaction of the present and the future."

This theme resonated throughout the evening as guests received updates on the happenings at HOME including the new Home for HOME capital project at the corner of Main and Ferry Streets.

Awards were given to celebrate greatness in our community. Among them was a graduating Kenmore West Senior Rachel Elizabeth Martin who received The Joanne Champion Granger Scholarship for her demonstration of academic excellence as well as her commitment to civil rights. Dr. James Boles and People, Inc. were presented with the Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award in recognition for their innovative advocacy and effective services provided to our community. Long time Board Treasurer and Vice President of Belmont Shelter Corporation Michael D. Riegel also received the Director's Award for his more than ten years of commitment on HOME's board of directors, seven as treasurer.

HOME members elected Janet E. Barnes chair, Gilbert R. Hernandez president, Lance A. Fertig Esq. senior vice president, Diana Cooke vice president, Dr. Rita A. Capezzi secretary, and Susan M. Fayle treasurer. New directors include Valerie J. DeBerry, Kathleen M. Haggerty, and Susan M. Fayle. Incumbents re-elected include: Grace A. Andriette Esq., Janet E. Barnes, William W. Berry Esq., Diana Cooke, Rosalie Civial, Lance A. Fertig Esq., Mary Jo Giambelluca, H. Christine Kregg, and David A. Wright Esq. Also remaining on the board are David J. Banks PhD., Rita A. Capezzi PhD, Philippe P. Deterville, James Giles, Patricia A. Harris Esq., Gilbert R. Hernandez, Marcie A. Kelley, Dan D. Kohane Esq., Samuel E. Loliger, Janet B. Meiselman, Angela R. Myles, and Scott W. Gehl (ex officio).

A special thanks to all HOME members who continue to support the necessary work that HOME does. Together we will continue to make a difference! If you are not already a member, consider joining us. Please see the renewal form on page 6 of this issue of Insight to become a member.

Oishei Foundation Grant ...*(Continued from Page 1)*

During the nine years since the Greater Buffalo Community Housing Center opened its doors, the program has helped 2,511 very low income families successfully lease housing. Sixty-nine percent chose to do so in non-poverty concentrated tracts, which the consent decree defined as having fewer than 35 percent of households below the poverty level.

There is a growing body of research which demonstrates that neighborhoods of concentrated poverty have difficulty sustaining economic and civic institutions essential to a healthy community. According to the Urban Institute's Margery Austin Turner: "Poor education, joblessness, teen parenthood, discrimination and crime reinforce one another, fueling a vicious cycle of poverty, inequality, isolation and distress."

Despite the success of the Greater Buffalo CHC, government declined to commit new funding for the program. By the end of 2007, dollars from the 1997 settlement had dwindled down to a precious few.

An invitation to dream

As reported in the last issue of *Insight*, in the final months of the year the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo committed \$33,176 to pay the salary of the GBCHC's sole full-time employee. Community Foundation staff also brought HOME's successful program to the attention of the Oishei Foundation.

Senior Program Officer Blythe Merrill made it clear from the outset that the Foundation was not interested in filling funding gaps, but would consider a proposal aimed at a more comprehensive approach to combat entrenched poverty and racial segregation. It was for HOME an invitation to dream.

As the result of action by the Foundation's board of directors, HOME will essentially double the number of families served by the Community Housing Center. The CHC will restore some

services lost over time and add new ones through an innovative collaboration with the University at Buffalo's Educational Opportunity Center, Goodwill Industries and the CASH (Creating Assets, Savings & Hope) Coalition.

Most significantly support from the Foundation will permit HOME to hire a social worker to provide one-year of case management for families who have chosen to move to opportunity communities (now redefined as having fewer than 25 percent of households living below the poverty level.)

The social worker will assist families who opt into case management with a range of issues: enrolling children in school, facilitating GED preparation and pre-collegiate education, assisting with job training and placement, and moving toward economic self-sufficiency.

The John R. Oishei Foundation, established in 1940 by the founder of Trico Products Corporation, has a mission of enhancing the quality of life of Buffalo area residents through support of education, healthcare, scientific research and the cultural, social, civic and charitable needs of the community.

The Greater Buffalo Community Housing Center provides a proven mechanism for its clients to enhance their quality of life.



Scott W. Gehl and HOME received the Erie County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award on Wednesday, April 30th, 2008 at the Law Day Luncheon. All staff was able to see Scott Gehl and Janet Barnes accept the Liberty Bell Award. Congratulations! Pictured above are Shannon Koehn, Scott Gehl and Margaret Brown.

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Board of Directors of Housing Opportunities Made Equal

I have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc., as of December 31, 2007 and 2006, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the organization's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. I believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc., as of December 31, 2007 and 2006 and the changes in its net assets and its 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.
March 23, 2008

Statement of Financial Position

| ASSETS | December 31 | |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| | 2007 | 2006 |
| Current assets: | | |
| Cash | \$510,437 | \$495,183 |
| Prepaid Building Costs | 1,430 | 0 |
| Grants receivable | 12,594 | 6,565 |
| Total current assets | <u>\$524,461</u> | <u>\$501,748</u> |
| Fixed assets: | | |
| Equipment & leasehold improvements | \$98,031 | \$98,031 |
| Less: accumulated depreciation | 88,600 | 87,159 |
| Net equipment and leasehold improvements | 9,431 | 10,872 |
| Equipment - Custodial | 3,651 | 3,651 |
| Less: Funds designated for acquisition by grantors | 3,651 | 3,651 |
| Net equipment - Custodial | 0 | 0 |
| Total assets | <u>\$533,892</u> | <u>\$512,620</u> |
| LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES | | |
| Deferred income | \$39,569 | \$44,766 |
| Refundable advances | 33,500 | 33,500 |
| Total liabilities | <u>\$73,069</u> | <u>\$78,266</u> |
| Fund Balances: | | 0 |
| General funds - unrestricted | \$189,771 | \$182,347 |
| - restricted | 271,052 | 252,007 |
| Total fund balances | 460,823 | 434,354 |
| Total liabilities and fund balances | <u>\$533,892</u> | <u>\$512,620</u> |

See accompanying "Independent Auditor's Report" and Notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Activities

Year Ended December 31, 2007 and 2006

| PUBLIC SUPPORT, GRANTS, & REVUE | December 31 | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2007 | | 2006 | |
| | UNRESTRICTED | RESTRICTED | TOTAL | TOTAL |
| Dues | \$18,053 | \$0 | 18,053 | \$13,134 |
| Contributions-general | 47,809 | 0 | 47,809 | 50,316 |
| Grants-City of Buffalo | 0 | 80,544 | 80,544 | 81,375 |
| Community Housing Center | 0 | 131,968 | 131,968 | 110,383 |
| HUD-FHIP | 0 | 105,086 | 105,086 | 113,844 |
| NYS OAG | 0 | 9,724 | 9,724 | 0 |
| Erie County | 0 | 20,881 | 20,881 | 22,017 |
| Town of Hamburg | 0 | 12,500 | 12,500 | 22,500 |
| Town of Amherst | 0 | 9,000 | 9,000 | 6,000 |
| Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Annual meeting (net) | 4,643 | 0 | 4,643 | 6,839 |
| Investment Income | 19,508 | 0 | 19,508 | 21,634 |
| Litigation | 11,500 | 0 | 11,500 | 12,050 |
| Endowment | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Sale of publications | 1,588 | 298 | 1,886 | 3,040 |
| Total revenues | <u>\$103,101</u> | <u>\$371,001</u> | <u>\$474,102</u> | <u>\$464,132</u> |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| Salaries | \$52,959 | \$243,553 | \$296,512 | \$274,949 |
| Employee fringe benefits | 20,934 | 53,952 | 74,886 | 72,664 |
| Subcontracts | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Telephone | 199 | 4,880 | 5,079 | 6,072 |
| Travel - local | 10 | 1,399 | 1,409 | 884 |
| Supplies: | | | | |
| Office | 1,206 | 2,631 | 3,837 | 2,534 |
| Services: | | | | |
| Dues & publications | 59 | 525 | 584 | 1,485 |
| Advertising | 68 | 577 | 645 | 957 |
| Printing | 4,577 | 4,322 | 8,899 | 8,908 |
| Postage | 25 | 4,883 | 4,908 | 4,717 |
| Rental - equipment | 137 | 2,388 | 2,525 | 2,405 |
| Rental - building | 3,135 | 16,250 | 19,385 | 18,925 |
| Payroll service | 20 | 829 | 849 | 850 |
| Accounting | 2,100 | 1,100 | 3,200 | 3,000 |
| Insurance | 100 | 4,219 | 4,319 | 3,995 |
| Sale of publication expense | 342 | 0 | 342 | 1,097 |
| Miscellaneous expenses | 7,698 | 10,348 | 18,046 | 9,840 |
| Training - Staff development | 472 | 0 | 472 | 1,700 |
| Depreciation | 1,441 | 0 | 1,441 | 1,001 |
| Repairs | 195 | 100 | 295 | 1,448 |
| Total expenses | \$95,677 | \$351,956 | \$447,633 | \$417,431 |
| Excess of revenues over expenses | <u>\$7,424</u> | <u>\$19,045</u> | <u>\$26,469</u> | <u>\$46,701</u> |

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

Patrons of HOME's 45th Annual Meeting ... Thank You!

Event Sponsor: HSBC Bank USA N. A. **Gold:** Damon & Morey LLP, Deborah Goldman & Grant Golden, and The Buffalo Urban League. **Silver:** Kathleen Butler, Rita A. Capezzi PhD., Delta Development, George & Adele DeTitta, Lance A. Fertig Esq., Hon. Eugene Fahey Justice Supreme Court, Scott & Danis Gehl, Hon. Betty J. Grant Erie County Legislator, Kathy Haggarty, Barbara J. Hole, James & Sandra Myers, Samuel E. Loliger & Donald M. Behr, Mimi & David Wright, and Hon. Gregory P. Rabb. **Corporate Leaders:** HSBC Bank USA. **Corporate Partners:** M & T Bank Foundation, and Oxford Consulting Inc. **Corporate Friends:** Affordable Housing Unlimited, Belmont Management Co. Inc., Belmont Shelter Corp., and Resetarits Construction Corp. **Corporate Members:** Delta Development, Hodgson Russ LLP, Hurwitz & Fine PC, Keybank N. A., Realty USA, The Bon Ton Foundation, U-C Coatings Corporation Inc.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2007 and 2006

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies Organization Background

Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. (HOME), was incorporated in 1963 as a not-for-profit counseling agency. Since its founding, HOME has, in accordance with federal, state and municipal fair housing laws, promoted equal opportunity in housing. The organization is exempt from federal income tax under Sections 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Basis of Accounting

The books and records of the organization are maintained on the accrual method of accounting and the financial statements reflect this basis. This method of accounting is consistent with other organizations that report to the same federal and state agencies.

To ensure observance of limitations and restrictions placed on the use of resources available to the company, the accounts are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. This is the procedure by which resources for various purposes are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purposes. Separate accounts are maintained for each fund; however, in the accompanying financial statements, funds that have similar characteristics have been combined into fund groups. All financial transactions have been recorded and reported by fund group.

Fixed Assets

Office equipment has been capitalized at cost and is being depreciated using accelerated methods over a useful life of five or seven years. In 1983 and 1989, office equipment was acquired with funds designated for acquisition by the City of Buffalo and the State of New York. This equipment was therefore expensed as purchased with a custodial equipment fund established to reflect expenditures made on the City and State's behalf.

2. Deferred Income

As of December 31, 2007 Housing Opportunities Made Equal had received \$39,569 in income under its Community Housing Center contract that was deferred to provide services in future years.

3. Refundable Advances

Refundable advances represent funds advanced to programs or grants in excess of permitted grant or program expenditures. These amounts are recognized as revenue in future periods as the appropriate expenses are incurred, or are refunded to the grantor if such expenses are not incurred by the Organization.

4. Fund Balance

All funds received from the County of Erie, City of Buffalo, Town of Hamburg, Town of Amherst, Community Housing Center and are restricted and can only be used for the purposes specified in the contracts executed with those government agencies.

The Board of Directors has designated \$158,780 as a JHK Endowment for Fair Housing Education. This consists of funds restricted by both board and donor designation.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal Inc., also has custody of \$9,349, which represents revenue from the sale of a book entitled "A Guide to Landlords' Rights." The publication of this book was sponsored by the Buffalo Housing Group, an unincorporated entity consisting of seven Western New York agencies, including Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.

Monies generated by the sale of this book are deposited into an interest bearing account under the control of Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. These monies cannot be used without consent of members of the Buffalo Housing Group. It is the intent of the Buffalo Housing Group to use these revenues from the sale of "A Guide to Landlords' Rights" to cover the expenses of future issues. In 2002, \$9,800 was used to publish the fourth edition of the Guide.

5. Cash

Cash consisted of the following as of December 31, 2007 and 2006:

| | December 31 | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2007 | 2006 |
| Petty Cash Fund | \$ 865 | 865 |
| Operating Account | 25,826 | 85,943 |
| Endowment | 158,780 | 154,896 |
| Investment Account | 299,243 | 225,555 |
| City of Buffalo | 6,369 | 303 |
| Buffalo Housing Group | 9,349 | 8,731 |
| Revolving litigation fund | 10,005 | 18,890 |
| | <u>\$ 510,437</u> | <u>\$ 495,183</u> |

6. Lease

Effective December 1, 2007 Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. entered into a new lease agreement with the EMI Building for office space at 700 Main Street, Buffalo, NY. The new lease increased rent from \$1,350 per month (under the previous agreement) to \$1,375 per month.

7. Prepaid Building Costs

HOME, Inc. has entered into a contract to purchase a mixed-use property at 1542 Main Street, Buffalo, NY as a future site for its offices and ten units of affordable housing. In 2007 HOME paid pre-development costs totaling \$31,480. A portion of these costs were offset by a grant of \$26,950 received from the NYS Housing Trust Fund and \$3,100 in other contributions. This results in a prepaid building cost of \$1,430 as of December 31, 2007.

Statement of Fund Balance

Year Ended December 31, 2007 and 2006

FUND BALANCES

DECEMBER 31

2007 2006

| | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| General funds - unrestricted and restricted | | |
| Balance - January 1 | \$434,354 | \$387,653 |
| Add: Excess of revenues over expenses January 1 to December 31 | 26,469 | 46,701 |
| Balance - December 31 | <u>\$460,823</u> | <u>\$434,354</u> |
| Unrestricted — | | |
| Unrestricted for the use of the organization | 189,771 | 182,347 |
| Restricted | | |
| To be used only for purposes specified in various grants | 102,923 | 88,380 |
| - To be used only for the John Howland Koekoek Endowment for Fair Housing Education | 158,780 | 154,896 |
| - To be used only with consent from the Buffalo Housing Group | 9,349 | 8,731 |
| Fund balances - December 31 | <u>\$460,823</u> | <u>\$434,354</u> |

See accompanying "Independent Auditor's Report."

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Janet E. Barnes began the report by saying that in 2007 there were good times and there were bad times, but HOME survived through it all. More than 9,000 individuals were touched by HOME last year alone. Now this is an extraordinary number by any measure and certainly for an agency with only six and one-half staff.

In the summer of 2007, HOME stood alone in questioning plans to construct an upscale gated community of student housing, which would displace hundreds of families from one of the most racially diverse census tracts in the town of Cheektowaga. HOME'S investigation and advocacy attracted the interest of the NYS Division of Human Rights, which announced major changes in plans for the project.

HOME has worked cooperatively with the city of Buffalo to implement its new Fair Housing Law and, and has filed the first complaints challenging illegal source of income discrimination.

HOME's education coordinator, Grace Smokowski, conceived and executed an innovative project around Gary Earl Ross' children's book, Dots. Grace read the book to young students at three Buffalo Schools, (Poplar Academy, Bilingual Academy and Westminster Charter School) and then asked them to draw visions of fair housing. The result was a exhibit in the Gallery at Buffalo Niagara International Airport, which was viewed by thousands of travelers.

In February of last year we filed a pair of discrimination complaints charging that the Town of Wheatfield had yielded to the forces of intolerance and exclusion by attempting to block construction of a previously approved affordable housing development. Our friends at Belmont Shelter Corporation held an open house to show off the Town Homes at Shawnee Landing, which will be the home to 64 families.

This past year, HOME won the support of two major foundations-the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation-to continue our innovative mobility program, and to move forward our Main-Ferry project.

We also suffered some significant financial losses. Despite this and despite staff vacancies, Scott and the staff increased service by 4.8%. We must have new revenue streams and ways to staff properly. We are currently working with Senator Schumer, Senator Thompson, the Oishei Foundation, Senator Slaughter and others. HOME will survive.

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Benefactor \$5,000 +

HSBC Bank USA, N. A.; and M & T Bank, N.A.

Leader \$2,500 - \$4,999

Rita Capezzi & Jeffrey Lowry; Citizen's Bank; and Scott & Danis Gehl.

Partner \$1,000 - \$2,499

Affordable Housing Unlimited; Rosalie Civial; Belmont Management Company, Inc.; Belmont Shelter Corporation; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; John & Maureen Hurley; Kenneth McClane & Rochelle Woods; Sarah G. Metzger; Oxford Consulting, Inc.; Realty USA, Inc.; and Resetarits Construction Corporation.

Patron \$500 - \$999

3D Development Group; Janet E. Barnes; The Buffalo Chapter The Links, Inc.; The Buffalo Urban League; Cusack Center for Professional Development, Inc.; Delta Development of WNY, Inc.; Freed, Maxick & Battaglia; Grant Golden & Deborah Goldman, Charles Hahn Foundation; Jaeckle, Fleischmann & Mugel, LLP; KeyBank, N. A.; Dan D. Kohane, Esq. & Hurwitz & Fine, PC; Richard & Mary Lesniak; Samuel E. Loliger & Donald M. Behr; Carl Nightengale & Martha McCluskey; North Presbyterian Church; People, Inc.; U-C Coatings Corporation, Inc.; Watergate II.

Friend \$250 - \$499

Jody & Budd Bailey; David J. Banks, Ph.D.; William Berry & Deborah Seifert; The Bon Ton Foundation; Marcus & Margaret Brown; The Buffalo Teacher's Federation; Marcia

Buhl; Joseph Butch; Kathleen Butler; Diana Cooke; Jean Doerr; Lance A. Fertig, Esq.; Amy & Jim Hecht; George & Sarah Hezel; Stephen Karnath, Esq.; Marjorie Murray; James & Sandra Myers; Rental Assistance Corporation, Inc.; Edward & Alana Weeks; and David & Mimi Wright.

Advocate \$100 - \$249

Anne M. Allan; Grace A. Andriette, Esq.; Back to Basics Ministries; Bernice Baeumler; Joan S. Baizer (in memory of Art Butler); Anne & Robert Bertholf; Barry Besmanoff; Anne L. Bird; John & Nancy Blaschak; Bette & Greg Blossat; Roberta Bothwell; Joan & John Bozer; EF Burke Co. LLP.; Wesley Carter; Cazenovia Recovery Systems, Inc.; Friends of Paul Clark; Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled; John Corcoran; Damon & Morey, LLP; Gary Dargush; Kathleen Dearce; Philippe P. Deterville; George & Adele Detitta; Ruth Irene Dwigans; Kenneth & DeAnna Eason; Deborah S. Ebel; Arthur & Constance Eve; Hon. Eugene Fahey; Susan M. Fayle; J. Michael & Loretta Fitzpatrick; David Filvaroff; Mark & Linda Foley; Robert Frank; David J. Galbo; Mary Jo Giambelluca; Carl & Eloise Granger; Carl A. Green; Paulette Hammond; Linda Hassberg, Esq.; James Haynes & Donald Light; Camille S. Hopkins; Darrell & Elizabeth Huckabone; Brenda Hull; Arthur & Alison Hyde; Eunice Jackson; Norman Joslin; Robert Kelly & Family; Shannon M. Koehn; Robert & Mary Kresse; Paul Kurtz Trust; Charles Lamb; Marilyn Lewis (KeyBank); Hon. Yvonne Lewis; Charles & Irazetta Martin; John & Johnnie

Mayo; Eugene & Glenda Meeks; Leah R. Mervine; James & Judy Metzger; Minority Bar Association; John & Andrea Moore; James Morrissey; Frank & Ulrica Mesiah; Christine Naples; The Buffalo Branch of The NAACP; Neighborhood Legal Services; Sanford & Margery Nobel; Robert North, Jr.; William & Mary Ostrowski; PCCB/Lt. Col. Matt Urban; Jannie & King Peterson; John J. Phelan (in m memory of Sydney Clanton, Jr.); Thomas Potts; R & P Oak Hill Development, LLC; Hon. Gregory P. Rabb; Jerry & Gilda Raiken; Religious Society of Friends; Thomas Schroeder; Mary & Thomas Scott; Brenda Shelton; Kenneth E. Sherman; Leonard Skrill & Sharon Murphy; Grace Smokowski & Brian McKenzie; William Smythe; Alan & Dottie Snitzer; Jeffrey & Brenda Stubblefield; Austin & Marilyn Swanson; Susan & David Udin; Yvette Veira; Gregory Wadsworth & John Byrnes; John C. Ward; Martin & Charlotte Wolpin; Dennis Woods & Eileen Dooley; and M. J. Zak Ventures.

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Housing Opportunities Made Equal's latest annual report may be obtained upon request from the office of the Attorney General Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271

HOME Board 2008-2009

By Kenneth Gholston

Janet E. Barnes, Chair, is the principal of Poplar Academy, and a member of the Erie County LINKS, and the National Honorary and Awards Committee of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She has been an active member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. since 1972, and is currently the First Vice President of the Buffalo Club and District, a member of the Honorary Members and Awards Committee as well as North East District and National Choir Director. Ms. Barnes was the 2004 recipient of HOME's highest honor, The James Crawford Award for Service to HOME.

Gilbert R. Hernandez, President, is a labor service representative for the New York State Department of Labor. He also serves on the board of the Shalom Zone and the Erie County Human Services Advisory Council and is the treasurer at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Lance A. Fertig, Esq., Senior Vice President, is a history, law and government teacher at Buffalo's Bennett High School and serves as its youth court advisor. He also teaches Hebrew at the Rock Academy. Before moving back to the Buffalo area, he was a domestic relations fact finder and mediator for the Shiawassee County Court in Michigan and served on State and County substance abuse boards. He is an active member of the Buffalo branch of the NAACP and the New Phoenix Theatre.

Diana Cooke, Vice President, teaches special education in the Buffalo Public Schools. She has her Masters of Science in special education from D'Youville College and a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration from Empire State College. She chairs HOME's Membership Committee.

Rita A. Capezzi, Ph.D., Secretary is an Associate Professor of English at Canisius College where she has served as a faculty member and administrator for 11 years. She is faculty advisor to UNITY, the College's GLBT and Allies group and a member of the School Based Management Team at BPS #32, the Bennett Park Montessori Center.

Grace Andriette, Esq. is supervising attorney for the housing unit of Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. (NLS). Her practice includes housing discrimination and landlord/tenant cases. She is a contributor to "A Guide to Landlords' Rights" and a member of the Erie County Fair Housing Partnership.

David J. Banks, Ph. D. is a long time HOME member. A Professor of Anthropology at the University of Buffalo, Mr. Banks has been a consultant and a reviewer on issues of diversity in education for the National Research Council and the Ford Foundation. Currently, he is doing research into Malay literature and writing on the role of Islam in such literature. He has made several trips to Borneo to conduct interviews regarding the influence of Islam on daily life.

William W. Berry, Esq. has been working on HOME's Inclusion Task Force for many years and is its co-chair. Mr. Berry is currently Supervising Attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged where he specializes in Medicare, Medicaid, health insurance and disability discrimination issues. He is the former Chair of the Erie County Bar Association's Committee for the Disabled. He has also written on disability issues for *Mental Health World*.

Rosalie Covial has been a member of HOME since 1965. She is a retired administrator for the Buffalo school system where she served as Director of Special Education for 20 years. She is a current member of the Buffalo Chapter of The Links, Inc., National Alliance of Black School Educators and Faith Baptist Church.

She has volunteered at ECMC as the chapel organist where she received the Council of Churches Service Award. She currently volunteers for the West Side Task Force for Children in Poverty and the African Educational Task Force.

Phillippe 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. He has been instrumental in HSBC becoming a corporate sponsor of the HOME Annual Meeting and Dinner.

Mary Jo Giambelluca is member of HOME for many years. She is skilled in community education, advocacy, legislative issues, personnel management program development and evaluation, and grant writing. She is a member of the Erie County Commission on Homelessness, the Network in Aging, Benedict House and other boards. Currently, she is the Director of Senior Services for People Inc.

Rev. James E. Giles is one of the founders and the executive director of Back to Basics Outreach Ministries. Back To Basics Ministries takes broken lives and puts them back together through sincere love, counseling and intervention. Rev. Giles is a community activist and works with many well-known organizations such as AmeriCorps, MAD DADs, Stop the Violence Coalition and the We Care Community. His work with youth has earned him recognition in the courts and throughout the WNY community. He hopes that HOME will gain from his experience as a grassroots organizer and that he can contribute to HOME's policy making process.

Linda R. Hassberg, Esq. is an attorney who worked at the Western New York Law Center on a variety of poverty and civil rights

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CONTRIBUTORS

(Continued from Page 6)

Rene Desai; Michael L. Devinney; Brad & Patricia Dossinger; C. Morgan Epes; Murray Ettinger; Nelly Fejer; Abel Fink; Jerome & Esther Fink; The Foundation of Jewish Philanthropy; David Gerber & Carolyn Korsmeyer; Collin Gehl; Gethsemane Full Gospel Church, Kenneth J. Gholston, Jr.; Marjorie Girth; Charles J. Glover; Richard & Jane Griffin; B. Gwendolyn Greene; William & Esther Greene; John & Eileen Grimaldi; Charlotte Gundlach; Margaret Guthrie; John Hackney; Claudia Hamilton; Theodore Hamilton; Cynthia Harmon; Minnie Harris; Nancy & Raymond Harro; Alvin Haven; William Hawkes; Sandra Heaney; Robert & Kathleen Heffern; Harriet & Ralph Halpern; Donald Hill; Gilbert R. Hernandez; Marilyn Hochfield; John J. Hoffman; Lorraine M. Hope; William T. Horonoe; Elizabeth Hutcheson; George & Wilma Iggers; Integrity

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**Thank You to All Our Members!
Together we can make a difference!**

CONTRIBUTORS

(Continued from Page 7)

issues, including housing discrimination. She is now an attorney for the Empire Justice Center working on Long Island.

Patricia A. Harris, Esq. is an Assistant Vice President at First Niagara Bank. When practicing law she concentrated in real property law. She has volunteered in the Allentown Association, West Side NHS and Black Rock NHS conduction classes for prospective homeowners.

Marcie A. Kelley is the Director of the Western New York Independent Living Project's Mental Health Peer Connection. She is currently the President of the Board of the Restoration Society, Inc. and Secretary for the Mental Health Empowerment Project. In addition to her volunteer work she is a photographer and likes to work on restoring old furniture.

Dan Kohane, Esq., an attorney with Hurwitz & Fine, P.C., served on the board from 1986-1998. Since 1998 he has served as counsel to the board. He was awarded the Directors Award for Distinguished Service in 1989, the James Crawford Award in 1993 and the Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award in 2000.

H. Christine Kregg was a co-founder and president of the Minority Health Coalition and the 2002 recipient of the University of Buffalo's Mildred Francis Lockwood Lacey Award for Excellence in Civic Responsibility. She is also a member of the Lupus/Toxic Waste Coalition and a volunteer for the Lupus Alliance of America.

Samuel E. Loliger, is professor emeritus of Sociology at Niagara County Community College. He is a member of the Anti-

Discrimination Task Force of WNY, the NYS Coordinator for the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns, and chair of the national UCC Affirmative Action Council and is also active in the denomination at the local level. He was the 1997 recipient of the James Crawford Award.

Janet Meiselman is the principal of Oxford Consulting Inc., a member of the Erie County Fair Housing Partnership, and an essential part of the Program Operations and Planning Committee. She was 2002's recipient of the James Crawford Award for Service to HOME.

Angela Myles works for the YWCA. She has a Masters of Social Work degree from University at Buffalo. She is a member of the UB Eastside Neighborhood Transformation Partnership Advisory board, the National Association of Social Work and Erie County Coalition Against Violence. She brings skills in community education, fundraising and diversity training all of which are assets to HOME.

Michael D. Riegel is the vice president and chief financial officer of Belmont Shelter Corp., where he has been employed for 20 years. Mr. Riegel is the committee chair for Boy Scout Troop 457, and also serves on various Belmont-related affordable housing organization boards.

David Wright, Esq. is Residential Judicial Coordinator for University at Buffalo. David has been a HOME member for 10 years and previously served as HOME's Assistant Director for Mobility Services guiding work of Greater Buffalo Community Housing Center for 6 years. Along with his legal skills, personnel management experience, planning expertise

and program evaluation skills, he also brings a unique experience of having been a staff member to the board.

Scott W. Gehl, Executive Director, is an ex-officio member of HOME's board. A former community organizer and Buffalo Councilman, Mr. Gehl received the first Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award. In 2004 he earned HUD's 2nd annual Pioneer of Fair Housing Award., and in 2008 received the Erie County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award.

New to the HOME Board for 2008-2009

Kathleen Haggerty is the Property Manager at the Carousel Park Apartments in North Tonawanda. Ms. Haggerty is no stranger to HOME, having worked closely with the Community Housing Center during her many years of service at Belmont Shelter Corporation.

Valerie DeBerry is the Executive Director of Human Resources for the Buffalo Board of Education. Ms. DeBerry brings over twenty-five years of human resource and operations experience, having worked with such companies as CIGNA, Proctor & Gamble, Rich Products and Kaleida Health. Ms. DeBerry is a member of various community organizations, and is a member of Leadership Buffalo's Class of 2007. And returning to the HOME board is

Susan Fayle, who is the Executive Director of the Trinity Tower Apartments of Buffalo, Inc. She has worn many hats for HOME, having served as Treasurer and Chair of the Board from 2002-2004. In 1997 Ms. Fayle was the recipient of the James Crawford Award for Service to HOME. HOME welcomes her return to the board.

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HOME'S Mission: Housing Opportunities Made Equal is a not-for-profit, civil rights organization working to ensure fair and equal housing. HOME promotes equal opportunity in housing without restrictions based on such factors as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, marital status, military status, sexual orientation, age, gender identity or expression, lawful source of income or the presence of children within a family. HOME'S mission is to assure the people of Western New York an equal opportunity to live in the housing and in the communities of their choice through education, advocacy, enforcement of fair housing laws, and the creation of housing opportunities.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. would like to give special thanks to ...

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