Become a HOME Volunteer
by Shannon M. Koehn

By definition a volunteer is one who serves others to benefit the community simply because they choose to do so. In general a volunteer does not receive compensation for services rendered. Volunteers are indeed motivated by a different sense of reward. Each person’s motivations will be unique. Some motivations include a desire to serve others, while other volunteers will look to satisfy their own needs in making another feel better. This is a good mix of altruism and a genuine desire to positively impact the quality of life. For more, volunteering is about a sense of giving back just a portion of the services that an individual has been afforded.

Perhaps you have benefited from the services of an organization and want to say “thank you.” Maybe you are attempting to fulfill a sense of duty or obligation and see volunteering as a way to participate in community as a responsibility that comes with citizenship. Then again, maybe you are just looking for a great way to meet like-minded individuals and expand your social circle.

Whatever the reason, there comes a sense of accomplishment and community in knowing that you’ve contributed to the life and well-being of others; be they individuals or organizations such as Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.

(Continued on Page 3)

Another Face of Housing Discrimination: Internet Advertisements
By Grace Smokowski

Have you ever browsed the internet and found yourself being excluded from a site? Has a website ever made you feel uncomfortable? Browse Craigslist.com and you may experience this.

In the form of a national swap sheet, Craigslist.com is a forum for people to submit or respond to listings of everything from job postings and personal advertisements to housing rental and sale advertisements. Since our last article on discriminatory language on the internet from the Fall 2006 issue of Insight, several breakthroughs have been made in the form of two cases being settled. Both cases involve Craigslist and HOME.

The first case, HOME v. Parker & M 4 Real Estate Company, is about an ad that was placed with Craigslist stating “no children.” An investigation was conducted by HOME and it was found that there was evidence of discrimination on the basis of familial status. The case was successfully conciliated with no admission of wrong doing on the part of the defendant. M 4 Real Estate Company agreed to check their ads for discriminatory language before posting, to undertake specified affirmative actions, and to educate their staff on fair housing laws. HOME did receive monetary compensation for the investigation.

This comes as a breakthrough because Craigslist in the past has clung to the Communications Decency Act saying that they were “information content providers” that did not edit what they publish but merely post ads submitted thereby exempt from fair housing laws. However, according to the Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful to “print, publish, or cause to be made, printed or published any notice, statement

(Continued on Page 2)

Diversity Starts at HOME: the 44th Annual Meeting
By Grace Smokowski

Accept it. Embrace it. Love it.

The theme for this year’s annual meeting was “Diversity Starts at HOME.” Two hundred thirty civil rights supporters gathered to celebrate HOME and its achievements for the year. The event was held on April 26, 2007 at the Buffalo Convention Center. A keynote address was given by Mr. Bryan Greene, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mr. Greene, addressed housing discrimination in its many forms, from rentals to real estate sales to insurance discrimination. He described, “This has been a banner year for fair housing...nationwide, more people who face discrimination have reported discrimination than ever before...this is a banner year because people are exercising their rights.” He continued to site statistics where over 10,300 people have filed complaints this year; that is a ten percent increase over last year. “This has been our hope,” Mr. Greene explained.

Mr. Greene also addressed the need to monitor discrimination in internet advertisements. HOME, which 25 years ago pioneered efforts to eliminate discrimination in print advertising, is now among the leaders in an effort to combat internet advertising discrimination. The Buffalo civil rights organization is now in settlement discussions with Craigslist.com over such a case.

(Continued on Page 3)
From the Director: DISCRIMINATION UP, HOME RESILIENT

By Scott W. Gehl

In 2006, Housing Opportunities Made Equal recorded a 35 percent increase in reported incidents of discrimination. Those discrimination cases must be viewed within the larger context of 4,250 individual requests for service and 4,176 additional people served through 146 educational presentations.

By any measure, these numbers are remarkable accomplishments for an agency with only 7.5 staff. They are all the more so when one considers how many professionals left HOME last year— including 10-year veteran Anne Huiner.

There are rare occasions when an over-used phrase is particularly apt; this is one: Anne, quite simply, took the business of fair housing education to a higher level. During the course of her decade at HOME, Anne displayed great creativity and communication skills, exemplary dedication, and a real passion for HOME’s social justice mission.

Wins & a loss

In the first part of 2006, HOME succeeded in an effort begun 38 years before to pass a Buffalo fair housing law. During the months that followed, we have worked diligently with the Fair Housing Officer and Corporation Counsel to make this law work for victims of discrimination protected by no other statute.

A collaborative relationship with the Office of the New York State Attorney General bore fruit when a HOME investigation resulted in a federal race discrimination case against West Seneca’s Royal York Apartments. The settlement agreement included a self-testing program. Ironically, the very first test of the complex yielded evidence of disability discrimination.

When the Town of Wheatfield – reacting to a broad range of discriminatory outrages from some residents – sought to block construction of a previously approved 64-unit affordable housing development, HOME filed Title VIII complaints against the town and its supervisor. At this writing, Wheatfield and non-profit developer Belmont Shelter Corporation have reached a settlement and construction is proceeding.

While HOME loses very few of the cases filed each year, in 2006 we lost an irreplaceable leader who was at the center of the struggle for fair housing since 1972. We continue to benefit from the lessons Dr. Arthur Butler taught during more than a third of a century on the board. In his honor, HOME’s conference room was renamed the Art Butler Boardroom.

Hopes for the future

In the last issue of Insight, I wrote of the return of Margaret Brown to HOME’s staff. The critical role of education coordinator has been filled by Grace Smokowski, a summa cum laude graduate of Buffalo State College and a published author. She is already off to an impressive start.

And HOME has been buoyed by the return of Shannon Koehn. After nine months away working in the development department of another respected non-profit, Shannon returns with a new title (director of development and administration), new expertise and renewed passion for the mission she had already held close to her heart.

Among Shannon’s major challenges will be raising funds for the Home for HOME project: our effort to take two long abandoned buildings at a major Buffalo intersection and create both 10 units of barrier-free energy-efficient affordable housing as well as a permanent home for HOME.

Thanks to the work of board member Janet Meiselman (of Oxford Consulting), HOME now has applications for this project pending with both the state’s Division of Housing and Community Renewal and Homeless Housing Assistance Program. We have also approached a leading area foundation for support and will soon announce our first-ever Capital Campaign.

The last three years have been as challenging a period as any in the modern history of HOME. However, the Board of Directors has emerged with renewed focus on its essential role, and emerging leadership compliments the efforts of those who have long labored to preserve the flame of fair housing.

Although buffeted by diminished resources and lost human capital, HOME has again proven its resilience. And there are better times ahead.

Internet Housing Discrimination

(Continued from Page 1)

or advertisement with respect to sale or rental of a dwelling that indicates preferences, limitations, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin or any intention to make such a preference, limitation or discrimination.” Ads such as “no children” or “perfect for a couple” are in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

Craigslist, which runs ads nationwide, also has a variety of ads posted that were discriminatory. For example, “non-women of color need not apply” or “Requirements: Clean, Godly, Christian Male.” Agencies in Texas, Connecticut, Long Island and Chicago as well as HOME rallied to file a complaint against Craigslist with HUD. This case is in the stages of conciliation currently.

With the successful conciliation of these two important cases, it may be assured that people across the nation and in Western New York will retain their rights to fair housing and be able to review ads without feeling left out or discriminated against.

The internet is a new frontier of information technology. By monitoring the internet for discriminatory language in housing ads HOME makes it more accepting and comfortable for all people to use the internet. Hopefully, there will come a time where the internet will police itself. For now, HOME keeps a watchful eye.
So if you’ve ever given serious thought to volunteering consider the following:
1. Research the causes and issues that are important to you.
2. Consider your skill set.
3. Think of something you’d like to learn more about.
4. Seek volunteer opportunities that will assist in achieving personal goals.
5. Consult your schedule to determine free-time.
6. Research the organization you are considering.
7. Consider volunteering with friends and/or family members.
8. Give voice to your heart through your giving and volunteering.
9. Look into completing a formal volunteer application.

Now that you have a sense of direction about volunteering, how about considering becoming a HOME volunteer?

If you’ve benefited from HOME’s services or just like what we stand for as the new face of civil rights in Western New York and you desire to become more active as a volunteer we’d love to hear from you.

Some things you could find yourself involved in as a HOME volunteer are: sitting on a board committee, assisting with fundraising efforts, helping with special events, recruiting additional HOME members, helping with mailings, marching in parades, developing community resources and even hosting or arranging fair housing educational presentations.

If you have a different skill set that you feel would be a good fit in helping to get HOME’s name out in the community or want to learn more about HOME’s volunteer opportunities feel free to contact Shannon M. Koehn at 716.854.1400 ext. 17 or skoehn@homeny.org.

HOME’s Mission:
Housing Opportunities Made Equal is a 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, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, lawful source of income or the presence of children within a family. HOME’s mission is to assist the people of Western New York to live in the housing and communities of their choice through education, advocacy, enforcement of fair housing laws, and the creation of housing opportunities.
**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, 2006 and 2005, 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, 2006 and 2005 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.
March 18, 2007

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**Statement of Activities**

Year Ended December 31, 2006 and 2005

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<th>PUBLIC SUPPORT, GRANTS,&amp; REVENUE</th>
<th>December 31</th>
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<td></td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td><strong>UNRESTRICTED</strong></td>
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<td>Dues</td>
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<td>Contributions- general</td>
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<td>Grants-City of Buffalo</td>
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<td>Community Housing Center</td>
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<td>HUD-FHIP</td>
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<td>NYS OAG</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
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<td>Litigation</td>
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<td>Endowment</td>
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<td>Sale of publications</td>
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<td>Subcontracts</td>
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<td>Travel - local</td>
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<td><strong>Excess of revenues</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$31,563</td>
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See accompanying “Independent Auditor’s Report” and Notes to the Financial Statements

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**Patrons of HOME’s 44th Annual Meeting ...Thank You!**

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2006 and 2005

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. Accordingly, 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, 2006 Housing Opportunities Made Equal had received $44,766 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 agencies 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 HUD-FHIP 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 $154,896 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 $8,731, 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, 2006 and 2005:

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<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>$ 865</td>
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<td>Endowment</td>
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<td>Investment Account</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of Buffalo</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>309</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buffalo Housing Group</td>
<td>8,731</td>
<td>7,405</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revolving litigation fund</td>
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<td>18,843</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Lease

Effective October 1, 2006 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 $1,325 per month (under the previous agreement) to $1,350 per month.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHAIR’S REPORT

Chair Janet E. Barnes began the report by saying that her position has been most rewarding. She personally thanked Scott Gehl and the staff which has performed astoundingly.

As the 7th most segregated city in the US, we have so many discrimination problems. You will be amazed to note that Scott and staff have counseled 4,250 people and have filed 16 discrimination cases with HUD or the courts. In addition, HOME has conciliated 31 cases prior to filing. Our small overworked staff also had 146 Educational Presentations and has been in the media 60 times.

Along with Antoine Thompson, HOME has helped to pass Buffalo’s first fair housing law. We also have helped implement the law here in Buffalo and in Hamburg. HOME has mobilized 39 agencies to advocate for passage of a law to assure human services for the most vulnerable citizens. In conjunction with Eliot Spitzer, then the New York State Attorney General, we successfully brought a significant discrimination case against a large West Seneca apartment complex. We are presently involved in a federal discrimination case in Wheatfield.

We are pleased to have made the decision to buy 2 vacant buildings at Main and Ferry as a “Home for HOME.” This 1.8 million dollar project will also include 10 apartment units. We will definitely be in touch with you on our Capital Campaign.

The sad loss of our friend and leader, Art Butler was deeply felt. Art was a member of HOME’s Board from 1972 until the day he passed. Thank you Art. We miss you.
THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS

Benefactor $5,000 +
HSBC Bank USA, N.A., M&T Bank, N.A.
Leader $2,500 - $4,999
John & Maureen Hurley, Rental Assistance Corporation
Partner $1,000 - $2,499
Patron $500 - $999
Friend $250 - $499
Advocate $100 - $249
Supporter up to $99

“The failures of the past must not be an excuse for the inactions of the present and the future.”
--Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1967)

JOIN HOME TODAY!

- Student/limited income .... $10
- Individual.......................... $30
- Family/Household............. $40
- Contributor ......................... $50
- Advocate .......................... $100
- Friend .............................. $250
- Patron ............................ $500

Detach and return this form to:
HOME, Inc.
700 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14202

For more information on membership contact HOME
(716) 854-1400 ext.17 or www.homyen.org

HOME’s latest annual report may be obtained upon request from the office of the Attorney General Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway New York NY 10271
Janet 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 Shawnee 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.

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.

Michael D. Riegel, Treasurer, 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.

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 and former board 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 Staff Attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged where he has been since October 1979. 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 also has 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 for the Buffalo school system where she served and is its co-chair. Mr. Berry is currently Staff Attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged where he has been since October 1979. 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 also has written on disability issues for Mental Health World.

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Mary Jo Giambelluca has a 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 the Homelessness, the Network in Aging, Benedict House and a number of 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. BTB 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 in private practice who has represented unions as well as individuals in employment discrimination and civil rights matters. She has also worked at the Western New York Law Center on a variety of poverty and civil rights issues, including housing discrimination. She is also a member of the Coalition for Economic Justice.

Camille S. Hopkins works as a Planner for the City of Buffalo. She directs the City’s Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Program. She is the founder of Spectrum Transgender Group of WNY and is the WNY Chapter President of National Transgender Rights Organization. She is a member of the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence - Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Domestic Violence Committee, the WNY Anti-Discrimination Coalition, PFLAG, and Stonewall Democrats. She has been recognized for her activism by a variety of GLBT organizations.

Dan Kohane, Esq. an attorney with Hurwitz & Fine, P.C., served on the board (Continued on Page 8)


HOME Board (Continued from Page 7)

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

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

Yvette Veira is a project director at Research Institute, University at Buffalo. She conducts research on substance abuse and child development, and serves as a facilitator for EPIC.

Scott W. Gehl, Executive Director, is an ex-officio member of HOME’s board. A former community organizer and Buffalo Councilman, Mr. Gehl was given the first Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award. In 2004 he earned HUD’s second annual Pioneer of Fair Housing Award.

New to the Board for 2007-2008 are:

Philippe 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 Dinner.

Angela Miles works for the YWCA. She has a Masters of Social Work degree from the 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. Angela brings skills in community education, fundraising and diversity training all of which will be assets to HOME.

Michael DeVinney is Director of the Independent Living Niagara County, a satellite of the WNY Independent Living Project. Michael, who has been disabled for more than 36 years began his career with the Access to Independence and Mobility Program at the Independent Living Center in Corning, New York. After a stint in South Carolina, he returned to WNY in 1997 to accept the position of Program and Services Director at the Niagara Frontier Center for Independent Living, where he worked until accepting his current position in 2006.

He has held memberships on numerous committees, associations and working groups representing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

David Wright, Esq. is the Residential Judicial Coordinator for the University at Buffalo. David has been a HOME member for 10 years and previously served as HOME’s Assistant Director for Mobility Services guiding the work of the Greater Buffalo Community Housing Center for six years.

Because of this long standing relationship with HOME he is well acquainted with the mission and the daily work that keeps HOME viable. Along with his legal skills, personnel management experience, planning expertise and program evaluation skills, David also brings a unique experience of having been a staff member to the board.

Michael DeVinney is Director of the Independent Living Niagara County, a satellite of the WNY Independent Living Project. Michael, who has been disabled for more than 36 years began his career with the Access to Independence and Mobility Program at the Independent Living Center in Corning, New York. After a stint in South Carolina, he returned to WNY in 1997 to accept the position of Program and Services Director at the Niagara Frontier Center for Independent Living, where he worked until accepting his current position in 2006.

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Because of this long standing relationship with HOME he is well acquainted with the mission and the daily work that keeps HOME viable. Along with his legal skills, personnel management experience, planning expertise and program evaluation skills, David also brings a unique experience of having been a staff member to the board.

Michael DeVinney is Director of the Independent Living Niagara County, a satellite of the WNY Independent Living Project. Michael, who has been disabled for more than 36 years began his career with the Access to Independence and Mobility Program at the Independent Living Center in Corning, New York. After a stint in South Carolina, he returned to WNY in 1997 to accept the position of Program and Services Director at the Niagara Frontier Center for Independent Living, where he worked until accepting his current position in 2006.

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