

# INSIGHT

Western New York's Source for Fair Housing News

VOLUME 43 NO. 2 HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES MADE EQUAL 700 Main Street Buffalo NY 14202 SUMMER 2006

## Segregating the poor and disabled

by William W. Berry

On June 27, 1995, spurred by cries of over-saturation in Allentown, the Common Council enacted what it called a "Restricted Use Permit" Ordinance (RUPO), Buffalo's first zoning restrictions directed specifically at "Human Service Facilities." Only David Collins dissented. With Allentown awash in fright and snobbery, the County Legislature had, barely two weeks earlier, convened its own "Social Services Siting Committee," explicitly designed to put these same human services providers through the funding blackmail wringer if they dared to propose West Side locations.

That month, the air itself seemed oversaturated with hate. At the June 20th Common Council Public Hearing on the proposed Ordinance, block club members shouted down a lone voice objecting to passage of a law targeting the disabled, minorities and the poor. On June 14th, to the loud acclaim of neighborhood association and business group partisans attending the very first Siting Committee meeting, the Deputy County Executive proposed a *ban* on all new West Side human service sites. Subsequently, in 1998, denied a permit after a required and inflammatory public hearing marked by the shameful grandstanding of certain Common Council members, an innovative homeless drop-in center brought suit in Federal District Court, successfully challenging the City's use of the Ordinance against the center as violating the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act and various state and local laws.

In November, 2002, after an extensive study of the operation of the Permit process from 1996 through 2001, the State Attorney General's office in Buffalo notified City attorneys that the City was applying RUPO inconsistently.

Perhaps in response, in June, 2003, the Council significantly amended the Ordinance, making the process less political by removing decisions from the Common Council to the Zoning Board, but also placing an impossible burden on human services providers to demonstrate that their

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## The bumpy road to civil rights

By Camille S. Hopkins

The road to civil rights has always been a bumpy one. The path to the City of Buffalo's fair housing ordinance was no exception.

Since 1968, HOME has been working to get a fair housing ordinance signed into law and through the years, various elected officials have found ways to hold back the enactment of this bill. HOME had hoped that the passage of time would have brought enlightenment. However, we discovered that same mindset was still in office.

Last summer, council member Antoine Thompson approached HOME for assistance in drafting a fair housing ordinance he planned to propose to the Common Council. The ordinance, unlike HOME's previous propos-

als, would include an exemption mirroring the New York State Human Rights Law for owner-occupied doubles. He felt that including this exemption would overcome

past opposition to a fair housing ordinance for Buffalo.

Mr. Thompson favored including prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of lawful source of income and adding gender identity and expression (GIE) as a protected class. (He and I had been instrumental in getting GEI into the City's anti-bias ordinance.)

**In 2002 I had been evicted from my apartment because I am transgender. I had no legal recourse because I was not in a protected class.**

Nearly as soon as it was proposed, the ordinance drafted by HOME and sponsored by Mr. Thompson was lost in the labyrinth of City maneuverings. After sessions in the Legislation Committee and

revisions by Corporation Counsel, a gutted version of the ordinance emerged. Some definitions had been altered to reduce or eliminate prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of gender

identity and expression and participation in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Major changes had also been made to the complaint process as well, eliminating nearly all city responsibility for enforcement.

HOME Executive Director Scott W. Gehl, informed all of us who had been included in the original

(Continued on page 2)

## Congresswoman Slaughter keynotes Annual Meeting

by Andrea Mujahid-Moore

**Look in the mirror – Do you see "the new face of civil rights?"**

The theme for this year's annual meeting "The New Face of Civil Rights", was a challenge to people who have not been active in the civil rights movement to get involved. The event was held on April 11, 2006 at the Buffalo Convention Center. Nearly 300 participants came out to enjoy good food, good company, excellent entertain-

ment and to hear our keynote speaker, Honorable Louise M. Slaughter.

Throughout the meeting, a slide show with faces of major contributors to civil rights was shown.

After the guests were welcomed, the entertainment for the evening was introduced. Moving Miracles Inc. is a dance/movement program for persons who are exceptionally challenged mentally, physically and/or emotionally. Their performance was extraordinary. It was so stirring, much of the audience was speechless and on their

feet for a standing ovation.

Following the dance performance, HOME's executive director, Scott W. Gehl, introduced the keynote speaker. Rep. Slaughter spoke eloquently about the history of the civil rights movement and need to continue the civil rights struggle. She said, "...laws on paper can only go so far. It is in the daily interactions between individuals where they are upheld, or ignored." She said that "It isn't enough to eradicate official segregation in hotels or on buses. If a

(Continued on page 3)

## From the Director: Impact of lost resources

by Scott W. Gehl

2005 was the year when the loss of government funding finally hit the fan at Housing Opportunities Made Equal.

As our staff fell from 13 to nine to 6.4, we struggled for a way to cope with undiminished demand for our services. After rejecting a number of more draconian alternatives, HOME chose to be more selective in outreach efforts and to reduce hours of intake to 25 per week. We also drank a lot of coffee.

By year's end HOME had provided individual counseling or information services for 4,808 clients—a decline of only 7.7 percent from the year before. HOME also managed to conduct 114 educational presentations for more than 4,300 participants and to be in the news on at least 71 different occasions. We did all this with a staff that was 50 percent smaller than the year before.

Ironically, the category of service which saw the greatest percentage decline was the one which HOME believes to be the most important: assistance to victims of discrimination, which decreased 30 percent. Despite any amount of coffee consumed, we are not delusional enough to think that—suddenly in 2005—there was 30 percent less housing discrimination in Western New York. Certainly some of the downturn may have resulted from decreased outreach, limited intake hours and even reductions in the number of new Section 8 vouchers issued.

But I also fear that some discrimination (increasingly insidious and covert) went undiscovered as over-burdened staff, responding to the imperative of the ringing telephone, simply lacked the time to carefully examine requests for service. It is unrealistic to assume any agency can indefinitely do more with less without affecting the quality of services provided.

With the partial restoration of City funding and significant support

won through HUD's highly competitive Fair Housing Initiatives Program, HOME is now in a better place with respect to resources. Coincidentally, during the first four months of 2006 reported incidents of discrimination are up 135 percent. Although we may now be discerning more of the discrimination which comes through HOME's doors, 2005 remains a cautionary tale.

### *A law at last*

Elsewhere in this issue, HOME volunteer Camille Hopkins has written of the final chapters in the 38 year struggle to pass a Buffalo Fair Housing Ordinance. Camille has been integral to HOME's efforts to promote an ordinance and, frankly, we thought it time for our readers to hear another voice and get another perspective.

It's more than a little ironic that 17 years ago, the Common Council actually passed a more progressive Fair Housing Ordinance (co-sponsored by Councilmembers Eugene Fahey and James Pitts) which was later vetoed by the then Mayor. By contrast, in 2006 a slightly less progressive measure could not even muster sufficient support to be brought to a vote.

We commend the good work of Councilmember Antoine Thompson, the sponsor of Buffalo's first successful Fair Housing Ordinance. Councilmembers Thompson, Brian Davis and Bonnie Russell also understood the need for a stronger measure which would assure equal opportunity for more of Buffalo's citizens.

But even the watered-down version which finally passed (with additional support from Councilmembers Michael LoCurto and Richard Fontana) did so by a bare 5-4 majority. One is left to wonder why people are still afraid of the idea of equal opportunity.

Finally, I must acknowledge the extraordinary support of the many members, Friends of HOME, and other people of conscience who communicated their desire for a meaningful law. Even better than some elected officials, they understand the importance of inclusion and diversity to the future of our city and region.

## NEW FAIR HOUSING LAW

(Continued from page 1)

discussions of what had occurred. Members of HOME's board and staff met with City officials numerous times to work out a feasible document. Once I learned of the missing components, I asked to be included in any future meetings concerning the ordinance. Besides wanting the best possible law for all Buffalo's residents, I had a personal stake in it. In 2002 I had been evicted from my apartment because I am transgender. I had no legal recourse because I was not in a protected class.

On February 21, 2006, I testified before the Legislation Committee about the need to have a law that respected all minorities. I testified again a month later. I feel that advocating for the ordinance led to being questioned by my supervisor. Other City employees reportedly faced this as well.

Despite input from all the supporters of a meaningful fair housing ordinance, on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the weakened version was passed 5 to 4. This version exempts owner occupied parcels with up to three housing units; as a result, the ordinance does not apply to much of Buffalo's housing stock. On the plus side, it does offer for the first time in the City of Buffalo anti-discrimination protection based on source of income and gender identity and expression.

After the vote, Councilmember Thompson commented, "It's not a perfect bill...but it's an important piece of legislation. Since 1968, Buffalo has been working to get a [fair housing] law on the books." It is his hope that the ordinance can later be strengthened.

I only hope we won't have to wait another 38 years.

## INSIGHT

### —HOME Officers—

Janet E. Barnes, *Chair*

Gilbert R. Hernandez, *President*

Stephen B. Karnath, Esq.,

*Senior Vice President*

H. Christine Kregg, *Vice President*

Lance A. Fertig, Esq., *Secretary*

Michael D. Riegel, *Treasurer*

Dr. Arthur Butler, *Honorary President*

### —HOME Staff—

Scott W. Gehl, *Executive Director*

Andrea A. Mujahid-Moore, Esq.,

*Associate Director*

Shannon M. Koehn, *Development Coordinator*

Kya Cooley, *Data Specialist*

M. DeAnna Eason,

*Investigations Coordinator*

Lisa M. Cruz, *Senior Counselor*

Kenneth J. Gholston, *Mobility Coordinator*

Anne Huiner, *Education Coordinator*

Xander J. Karsten, *Mobility Intern*

### —Contributors—

William W. Berry, Kya Cooley, Scott W. Gehl, Camille S. Hopkins, Shannon M. Koehn, Andrea Mujahid-Moore, & Anne Huiner, *Editor*

**ANNUAL MEETING...** (Continued from page 1) person can't get a job ..., obtain a loan..., find a home where they can raise a family... then their inherent right to the pursuit of happiness is being denied." Rep. Slaughter praised the work of HOME and other civil rights organizations and commented on the toll funding cut-backs have caused and pledged, "Today I give you my word that I will do everything I can to reverse this disturbing trend."

#### **Awards and elections**

After the keynote address, Charles C. Thomas III gave the chair's report (see highlights). This was followed by elections for board members and officers. Officers for the year 2006-07 are Janet E. Barnes, Chair; Gilbert R. Hernandez, President, Stephen B. Karnath, Esq.; Senior Vice President; H. Chris Kregg, Vice President; Lance A. Fertig, Esq., Secretary; and Michael D. Riegel, Treasurer.

At the conclusion of the elections, Scott W. Gehl introduced HUD's Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bryan Greene who spoke about the significant role the Buffalo-Niagara Region, birthplace of the Niagara Movement, played in the history of civil rights. He said that it was here the foundation was laid. And it was now up to us to continue the fight for civil rights-- to be an example for our youth and encourage them to become the new faces of civil rights.

This year, thanks to M&T Bank, an increased Joanne Champion Granger Scholarship Award was given to three of these new faces. The high school seniors were recognized for their academic excellence and contributions to human rights. The first prize of \$2000 was given to Nercy Moreno of Grover Cleveland High School; a second prize of \$1000 went to Victoire Dushine, also of Grover Cleveland High School, and the third prize of \$500 was awarded to Kenneth Andrew Joseph of Williamsville North High School.

William Marks, retired from the NYS Division of Human Rights, was recognized for his outstanding work in assuring justice to victims of housing discrimination and Charles E. Martin, retired from HUD, was awarded for his sustained efforts to affirmatively further fair housing in WNY. The Honorable John T. Curtin was given the Sarah G. Metzger award for Outstanding Contributions to Further Civil Rights. Elizabeth Clark and Scott Gehl then presented the James Crawford Award to a visibly moved Charles C. Thomas III.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30. Everyone agreed that thanks to the efforts of Shannon Koehn, Janet Barnes and the hardworking committee members and HOME staff, this may have been the best Annual Meeting in HOME's history.

**SEGREGATING...** (Continued from page 1) presence would *not* adversely impact neighborhoods. Indeed, the new law replaced a percentage standard for measuring adverse neighborhood impact with a subjective "alter the character" standard, actually increasing the likelihood of arbitrary denials, and exacerbated that perversion by retaining the incendiary public hearing requirement, disguised in the domino of the general Zoning Code.

In April of that year, after three years of collaborative study, work and give and take, a coalition of service providers and their clients, known as the Inclusion Task Force (ITF), organized by HOME Executive Director Scott W. Gehl, had agreed to propose to the City a siting ordinance the group had written with an eye to minimizing discriminatory impact on the disabled poor. The ITF had considered and agreed with arguments that *any* zoning regulation aimed exclusively at social service providers and their clients was discriminatory, but opted to work in the real world.

Upon presenting the proposal to the Corporation Counsel in early June, the ITF learned of the Common Council's proposed amendments and scrambled to organize support among the lawmakers. But the Council went its own way.

The ITF continued to advocate for their submission throughout 2003, filing it and bringing it up for discussion before the Legislation Committee. The hallmarks of the ITF's original plan included an accommodating statement of intent, a shift of authority from the Council to the Planning Board, the automatic grant of a Permit if objective concentration percentages were not exceeded, and an optional rather than a required public hearing if the percentages were exceeded.

Invited to "meld" its proposal with the existing Ordinance by the Chair of the Legislation Committee in February, 2004, the ITF went back to the drawing board and, in October, after the existing one had expired, proposed a "melded" Ordinance. This one kept the conciliatory tone, went along with the shift of authority from the Council to the Zoning Board, replacing the automatic grant with a presumption of "no adverse impact" when concentration did not exceed the "bright line" percentage.

Under general Zoning provisions, any application to the Zoning Board is subject to a public hearing and the melded version did not change that. In November, the Council tabled the proposal for an opinion by the Corporation Counsel.

The ITF prodded City lawyers for an opinion on the proposed "melded" Ordinance and finally in July, 2005 they re-

sponded. An Assistant Corporation Counsel explained that the Ordinance had expired in July, 2004 and that her office would not approve *any* further such provisions or amendments because State jurisdiction pre-empted local regulation of these matters.

Given these assurances, but also aware of evidence that the City had continued to enforce the expired rules, the Task Force adopted a "watchful waiting" stance. Certainly no ordinance was better even than the Task Force' original version. But the group protested the City's continued exercise of non-existent authority and asked the Council's Legislation Committee to advise them of any attempts to revive the lapsed Ordinance.

And that is just what happened.

Echoing Allentown's 1995 xenophobic outburst, the Parkside area erupted when, in February, 2006, a provider of residential chemical dependence treatment sought to locate in a 70 year-old industrial building at Main and Amherst Streets. The Council responded with a resolution to "restart" the extinct Restricted Use Permit Ordinance. But because it had a more human alternative all ready to go and an intact communications structure, the Task Force was able to act effectively.

The group resumed its dialogue with the Corporation Counsel's office, which now, part of a new regime, no longer felt bound to respect its earlier position that it would not approve such an Ordinance. The Task Force then returned to its advocacy before the Common Council at a public hearing and at a special meeting of the Legislation Committee, called expressly to examine the ITF's "melded" version of the law. As of this writing, the Corporation Counsel is working on a draft which we hope will ease the discriminatory burden on providers and their clients.

RUPO, as it existed, spawned numerous afflictions on the provision of services to the disabled poor. Among them were a tendency toward increased steering of services into sections of the City in which opposition is muted or non-existent; an equally dramatic and scary tendency to fan the flames of intolerance by grandstanding politicians and neighborhood residents at public hearings; a confirmed and steady drain on the resources and time of service providers resulting in fewer services provided; and extreme inconvenience traveling to or total deprivation of services because of inaccessibility.

ITF supporters can rest assured that their efforts have set some limits on these offspring of intolerance.

## Independent Auditor's Report

## Statement of Activities Year Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004

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, 2005 and 2004, 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, 2005 and 2004 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 22, 2006

## Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	December 31	
	2005	2004
Current assets:		
Cash	\$375,858	\$557,179
Grants receivable	5,632	1,547
Total current assets	381,490	558,726
Fixed assets:		
Equipment & leasehold improvements	92,321	92,321
Less: accumulated depreciation	86,158	85,787
Net equipment and leasehold improvements	6,163	6,534
Equipment - Custodial	3,651	3,651
Less: Funds designated for acquisition by grantors	3,651	3,651
Net equipment - Custodial	0	0
Total assets	\$387,653	\$565,260
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</b>		
Deferred income	0	\$156,721
Total liabilities	0	156,721
Fund Balances:		
General funds - unrestricted	150,784	181,383
- restricted	236,869	227,156
Total fund balances	387,653	408,539
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$387,653	\$565,260

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

PUBLIC SUPPORT,  
GRANTS & REVENUE

	2005		December 31		2004
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
Dues	\$14,286	0	\$14,286		\$15,910
Contributions-general	48,132	0	48,132		47,097
Grants-City of Buffalo	0	49,072	49,072		63,494
Community Housing Center	0	156,721	156,721		184,205
HUD-FHIP	0	0	0		136,000
NYS OAG	0	6,315	6,315		0
Erie County	0	24,150	24,150		25,000
Town of Hamburg	0	20,000	20,000		27,500
Town of Amherst	0	6,000	6,000		2,500
Services	11,670	0	11,670		27,330
Annual meeting (net)	4,505	0	4,505		7,693
Interest received	4,153	8,800	12,953		10,139
Litigation	29,179	0	29,179		29,588
Endowment	0	1,863	1,863		1,100
Sale of publications	806	652	1,458		1,853
Total revenues	\$112,731	\$273,573	\$386,304		\$579,409
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Salaries	\$85,858	\$192,002	\$277,860		\$337,960
Employee fringe benefits	24,132	40,677	64,809		84,233
Subcontracts	0	0	0		1,220
Telephone	20	5,075	5,095		7,016
Travel - local	20	1,282	1,302		3,308
Supplies:					
Office	200	2,468	2,668		2,938
Services:					
Dues & publications	321	445	766		565
Advertising	20	162	182		25
Printing	4,546	1,771	6,317		9,341
Postage	308	5,095	5,403		3,646
Rental - equipment	665	1,723	2,388		3,740
Rental - building	9,195	12,580	21,775		25,070
Payroll service	122	467	589		671
Accounting	1,600	2,900	4,500		4,450
Insurance	1,254	2,675	3,929		4,438
Sale of publication expense	778	0	778		961
Miscellaneous expenses	4,209	3,919	8,128		8,064
Training - Staff develop-	0	0	0		2,066
Depreciation	87	284	371		1,656
Repairs	330	0	330		724
Total expenses	\$133,665	\$273,525	\$407,190		\$502,092
Excess of revenues over expenses	(\$20,934)	\$48	(\$20,886)		\$77,317

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

**Patrons of HOME's 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting ...Thank You!**

**Platinum:** Janet E. Barnes, Scott & Danis Gehl, Gilbert R. Hernandez, Samuel E. Loliger & Donald M. Behr, Michael D. Reigel, Chuck & Karen Thomas. **Gold:** Art & Kathleen Butler, Elizabeth G. Clark, Esq., Delta Development of WNY, Inc., The Honorable & Mrs. Norman E. Joslin, Mr. & Mrs. Robert T. Kresse, Living Opportunities of DePaul, Musarra Management & Investment, Sandra & James Myers, Kathy O'Brien & Elaine Meier. **Silver:** Bill Brady, Catherine M. Braniecki, Catholic Charities of Buffalo, Ellicott District Community Development, Inc., Jean Doerr & Robert Kaplan, The Honorable Eugene M. Fahey, Lance A. Fertig, Esq., Jeffrey M. Freedman, Esq., John & Maureen Hurley, The Honorable Yvonne Lewis, Leah R. Mervine, Marjorie J. Murray and Gregory P. Rabb.

**Notes to the Financial Statements** Years Ended December 31, 2005 & 2004

**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, 2004 Housing Opportunities Made Equal had received \$156,721 in income under its Community Housing Center contract that was deferred to provide services in future years. As of December 31, 2005 this deferred income had been completely expended.

**3. 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 of Housing Opportunities Made Equal Inc., has restricted \$154,040 as a John Howland Koekoek Endowment for Fair Housing Education.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal Inc., also has custody of \$7,405 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 addition of the guide.

**4. Cash**

Cash consisted of the following as of December 31, 2005 and 2004:

	December 31	
	2005	2004
Petty Cash Fund	\$ 865	\$ 865
Operating Account	43,567	107,749
Endowment	154,040	145,240
Investment Account	150,829	275,635
City of Buffalo	309	2,355
Buffalo Housing Group	7,405	6,540
Revolving litigation fund	18,843	18,795
	<u>\$ 375,858</u>	<u>\$ 557,179</u>

**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.

**Statement of Fund Balance** Years Ended December 31, 2005 & 2004

FUND BALANCES	DECEMBER 31	
	2005	2004
General funds - unrestricted and restricted		
Balance - January 1	\$408,539	\$331,222
Add: Excess of revenues over expenses January 1 to December 31	(20,886)	77,317
Balance - December 31	\$387,653	\$408,539
Unrestricted —		
Unrestricted for the use of the organization	150,784	181,383
Restricted		
To be used only for purposes specified in various grants		
	75,424	75,376
- To be used only for the John Howland Koekoek Endowment for Fair Housing Education	154,040	145,240
- To be used only with consent from the Buffalo Housing Group	7,405	6,540
Fund balances - December 31	387,653	408,539

See accompanying "Independent Auditor's Report."

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHAIR'S REPORT**

At HOME's Annual Meeting, Board Chair Charles C Thomas III opened his report by quoting Charles Dickens. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." Then he gave examples...

HOME assisted in drafting a **Fair Housing Ordinance for Buffalo.**

HOME mobilized resources to **restore nearly \$55,000** in City fair housing funding.

The **Town of Hamburg** approved amendments authored by HOME which **strengthened its 1986 fair housing law.**

HOME sponsored a highly successful poetry jam entitled "**Across the Lines: Poets Respond to Discrimination,**" the first event in the nation to combine National Fair Housing and Poetry Month.

Loss of funding forced a **reduction in HOME staff** from 13 to 6.4 positions and a reduction of office space. Careful management enabled HOME to **withstand a reduction of more than \$340,000 in revenue** and end the year with a \$21,000 deficit

HOME's **special project for the State Attorney General's Office** resulted in a State- initiated lawsuit against a large suburban housing complex.

HOME completed an **Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Study for the City of Niagara Falls.**

Despite not being funded by HUD in 2005, HOME received yet another **100 percent contract performance rating** for the contract just completed. **HUD awarded \$218,900 to HOME to continue fair housing enforcement in 2006-07.**

Working with HOME, the WNY Law Center and the Justice Center finally compelled the **City of Buffalo to honor its 1997 contract to fund the Community Housing Center.**

HOME settled cases against two WNY publishers and yet established **positive relationships with both.**

Even though financially these were "the worst of times," HOME survived — and in the spirit of "the best of times" **HOME is still helping people and winning victories.**

**THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS**

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## HOME board 2005-2006

by Kenneth Gholston

**Chuck C. Thomas III AICP, Chair**, was the deputy director of planning for the City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning. He is a member of the American Planners Association's WNY Chapter, the Urban Land Institute and the Congress for New Urbanism.

**Janet Barnes, President**, is the principal of Poplar Academy, and a member of the Erie County LINKS, and the National Honorary and Awards Committee of AKA Sorority. She has been an active member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. since 1972. Ms. Barnes was the 2004 recipient of HOME's highest honor, The James Crawford Award for Service to HOME.

**Stephen B. Karnath, Esq., Senior Vice President**, has spent 18 years working with affordable housing developers as a housing and community development representative with the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal. He is chair of the Rental Assistance Corporation of Buffalo's Utilization Committee and serves on the board of Downtown Neighborhood Development.

**H. Christine Kregg, Vice President** is 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.

**Lance A. Fertig, Esq., Secretary**, teaches at Bennett High School and serves as its youth court advisor. He also teaches Hebrew at the Rock Academy. Before returning to Buffalo, 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.

**Michael D. Riegel, Treasurer**, is VP/CFO for 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.

**Dr. Arthur Butler, Honorary President**, is a member of the Endowment Trust at the Unitarian Church in Amherst and chaired HOME's Joanne Champion Granger Scholarship Committee. Mr. Butler was the 1987 recipient of the James Crawford Award for Service to HOME.

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

**Catherine M. Braniecki**, is the vice president, CRA Compliance Manager for Key-Bank, NA. She has enjoyed a 30 year career in the housing and community development field. She currently serves on the boards of the Rental Assistance Corporation of Buffalo, Cazenovia Recovery Systems, Inc. and the Homeless Alliance of WNY. She is President of the board of Trustees of St. Mary's High School in Lancaster.

**Mary Ellen Brockmyre** is the Director of Funding and Program Development at Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled. She has worked in the field of developmental disabilities of the past 20 years. She has served on the Board of Directors for Black Rock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services and All Saints School.

**Rita A. Capezzi, Ph.D.** 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.

**Elizabeth G. Clark, Esq.**, has been in-

involved with HOME over 40 years. She is on the boards of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation and Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County, which she chairs. Ms. Clark was the 2005 recipient of the James Crawford Award.

**Diana Cooke** 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.

**Rosalie Civial** has been a member of HOME since 1965. She served as Director of Special Education for 20 years in the Buffalo school system. She is a member of the Buffalo Chapter of The Links, Inc. and the National Alliance of Black School Educators. She volunteers for the West Side Task Force for Children in Poverty and the African Educational Task Force.

**Susan M. Fayle** is the CEO of Trinity Tower of Buffalo, Inc., She is a Realtor and a certified Retirement Housing Professional. Ms. Fayle is on the board of directors of Concerned Ecumenical Ministry (CEM), the Lutheran Church Home, and the Greenfield Court, and on the board of trustees of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Ms. Fayle was the 1997 recipient of the James Crawford Award.

**Susan Gaska** has many years of experience providing housing to low income women and children. She is a long time advocate, served on the Erie County Commission on Homelessness for several years and volunteers with the Women's TAP Fund, a PAC for local female pro-choice candidates.

**Linda R. Hassberg, Esq.** is an associate at Lipsitz, Green, Fahringer, Roll, Salisbury & Cambria, LLP, specializing in employment discrimination and civil rights matters. Previously, she worked at the WNY Law Center on a variety of poverty and civil rights issues, including housing discrimination. She is a

(Continued on page 8)

### MEMBERS (Continued from page 6)

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## HOME's new board members

by Lisa M. Cruz

**David J. Banks** is a long time HOME member and former board member. A Professor of Anthropology at the University of Buffalo, he has been a consultant and a reviewer on 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 study the influence of Islam on daily life.

**William W. Berry, Esq.** has been the co-chair of HOME's Inclusion Task Force

for many years. Since 1979, he has been a staff attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged specializing 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 and has written on disability issues for *Mental Health World*.

**Rev. James E. Giles** is one of the founders and the executive director of Back to Basics Outreach Ministries. He works with many 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.

**Mary Jo Giambelluca**, Director of Senior Services for People Inc., has been 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.

**Mark V. Johnson** works for the NYS Department of Housing and Community Renewal as a field representative for the Low Income Weatherization Program. He worked at Moog Space Products for 12 years as an architectural draftsman and he was a consultant for the City of Buffalo. He is also an ordained elder.

**HOME BOARD** (Continued from page 7)  
member of the Coalition for Economic Justice.

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

**Camille S. Hopkins** is a planner for the City of Buffalo and directs the City's HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS) Program. She is the founder of Spectrum Transgender Group of WNY. She is a member of the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence - Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Domestic Violence Committee, and the WNY Anti-Discrimination Coalition.

**Eunice D. Jackson** is a lifetime member of the NAACP, a member of the Canisius College Scholarship Associates, and serves on the board of LEWAC Associates of WNY, Inc. She was the first African-American president of the Phi Delta Kappa Fraternity. She serves as Chair of National Trends and Services for the Erie County Chapter of The Links, Inc., Vice

Chair for LEWAC, and is a volunteer at the Al-bright-Knox Art Gallery.

**Dan Kohane, Esq.**, an attorney with Hurwitz & Fine, P.C., has served as counsel to the board since 1998. He was awarded the Directors Award in 1989, the James Crawford Award in 1993 and the Sarah G. Metzger Human Rights Award in 2000.

**Samuel E. Loliger** 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 and chairs the national UCC Affirmative Action Council. 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.

**Leah R. Mervine** spent ten years working for AIDS-related causes and performed a one-year tour of duty as HOME's Coordinator of Devel-

opment and Member Relations. She currently attends the University at Buffalo's School of Law where she is working on her Juris Doctor and Masters of Social Work.

**Juan Carlos Valentin** has 23 years experience in Human Services. He serves on the boards of the Erie County Youth Services (Chairman) and Chameleon Community School Project and is President of Hispanic Network of WNY, Inc. He is the founder of the Latino Lions Club Branch in WNY.

**Yvette Veira** is a project director at UB's Research Institute on Addictions. She conducts research on substance abuse and child development, and serves as a facilitator for EPIC.

**Scott W. Gehl, Executive Director** (*ex-officio*) 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.

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