

MASW Human Rights Task Force
Meeting Report, February 25, 2010
606 East Capitol, Jefferson City

Present: Eric Krekel, Carol Zablocki, Stephanie Pate, Nancy Browning, Jennifer Rafanan (by phone), Stu Murphy, Don Love (reporting)

1. **Sparkplug Foundation Grant:**

- a. Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates (**MIRA**) \$500 allocated. Christine and Stephanie are working on a Columbia service provider event with Centro Latino for the first week in April. Stephanie and an intern at CL will combine it with a program on legislation affecting immigrants.
- b. Lenny Ziskind and/or Larry Brown (both of whom have indicated an interest) on **hate groups**, with human trafficking included as an example of barriers to an accepting society. Larry will be speaking in JC February 27, at an interfaith gathering. Don will urge KC Chapter to set something up with Lenny, since that's where he lives.
- c. Enforcing **hate crimes laws** with input from local police, Department of Justice, MHRC and representatives of target groups. Stephanie and Don have made initial contacts for a JC event, but we think it would be best to start with something that focuses on the pd's efforts to improve neighborhood policing, which will fit in well with the profiling effort. We'll work with El Puente, Capitol Area Interfaith Alliance, NAACP, Human Relations Commission, etc.
- d. Kevin Willmott's **The Only Good Indian** (<http://www.theonlygoodindian.com/>), documentary about 19th Century Kansas with a bounty hunter after a Native American. Nancy and Rod Chapel, Jeff City NAACP president, arranged a screening but has now (update as of 3/2) been postponed to 4 pm, Thursday, 3/25, at Lincoln U Langston Hughes Theater. Nancy will write a statement for grant documentation. We'll set up an MASW table, and collect evaluation forms. \$200 allocated from grant. A small dinner with Willmott is planned; anyone interested.
- e. **Racial Profiling**. Don met with Columbia police chief Burton; we are in agreement about the problem and a strategy for improvement. Don will round up experts to lay out the elements of a diversity training program that can help officers with unconscious bias. Burton will work on implementation, including improvements in a wide variety of law enforcement strategies to improve relationships with minority communities. We will build a coalition of groups to support the effort and educate the public. Stephanie and Don spoke with Columbia Human Rights Commission staff; they want to cooperate with us on this and other projects.

Kathleen Clark, Wash U Law School, recommended *Good Cop: the case for preventive policing* by **David Harris** as good background on the problems associated with profiling. It gives the big picture of how better relationships between police departments and communities prevent crime and protect citizen rights. HRTF voted to explore the possibility of having Harris speak at several sites in Missouri.

(3/2 update: Harris is interested in coming, with attractive financial arrangements: basically just his expenses. Don is working on arrangements for events in St Louis, Columbia (maybe JC), KC and Springfield. His visit would probable use up most of the rest of the grant money.)
- f. **Job Discrimination Forum** aimed at employee rights. MCHR, Columbia HRC (Marie and Steve Hollis), ACLU (Dan) have expressed an interest in this. This keeps being bumped back because of other things, but Columbia HRC continues to be interested.

G. Human Trafficking: Nanette Ward is thinking about possible programs.

2. Updates:

a. **Springfield Human Rights Commission** update: The Mayor's Commission on Human Rights Strategic Planning Group has completed its Action Plan that will be presented to the Springfield City Council for approval, hopefully, by May. The Strategic Planning Group is doing some final editing of this report. Our final draft should be ready for review and the city's budget process by the end of March 2010.

The Springfield Human Rights Commission now has 10 active Commissioners, and held its first meeting since June 2009 on February 17, 2010. Mayor O'Neal attended this meeting and was given a draft copy of the Action Plan. He has offered his support and will be assigning a City Council member to attend HRC meetings as city liaison.

b. **Tasers:** The Taser-free group is building support in Columbia for a ban, with backing from MASW Central chapter. Joan Bray has offered SB590 which creates a task force. Webber and Roorda have offered HCR 30 which creates a legislative committee to study "less lethal" (or "less than lethal") weapons used by law enforcement.

c. **Bullying/suicide prevention:** This fits nicely with the effort around profiling and diversity training, so that will be a good opportunity to work on it.

d. **Centralia nondiscrimination** ordinance was defeated by a 5-2 vote. We would support work on a Boone County ordinance, but the county may not have this power. Promo and Columbia activists are contemplating an effort to add transgender to the Columbia non-discrimination ordinance; We support them.

3. DeAnna Alonso has a resource center in Jeff City for **foster care** kids and families. Her priorities are better services for kids who are aging out and better distribution of resources statewide; St Louis and Kansas City take everything. She is also concerned that Department of Corrections doesn't gather data on foster kids who end up in prison; if they kept better records, better foster care services would be justified.

4. Other Events

a. **Universal Design.** Columbia HRC will cooperate on a program in April to present information about UD to as many individuals and representatives of groups as we can round up. Leslie Anderson of Columbia Services for Independent Living will provide expertise and connections. We will try to bring Colleen Starkloff in as the presenter.

Springfield has a five year strategic plan to include UD in public accommodations, hotels, restaurants, etc.

b. **fair housing:** Steve Hollis thinks an advocacy group should be working on fair housing issues. Bob Quinn and Don will schedule a meeting with him and Tom Lata, Columbia Community Development Coordinator.

Eric says Impediment to Fair Housing reports are good places to go to see the sort of problems that come up. Here's Columbia's most recent:

http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Planning/Housing_Programs/documents/FairHousingDocument2010.pdf

c. **advertisements.** Steve says grant money is available from Columbia for public service ads on commercial TV or radio addressing social justice issues. Don will investigate the possibility of producing ads related to profiling and UD.

4. **Legislation:** The Chair hasn't been able to keep this list updated with hearings, amendments, votes, etc., We need to see if we can develop a better way of doing this.

Perhaps a Facebook page would work, on which everyone could post updates on the bills of interest.

5. **Lobby days**; let's do what we can to support each other's efforts on special HR topics

- a. MASW Student Advocacy Day, Tuesday, March 2
- d. Promo Equality Day, Wednesday, March 24
- e. UD, aging, disabilities, etc.
- f. League of Women Voters
- g. MASW Economic Justice TF on fair taxes
- h. foster care
- i. others

6. **Other events**:

- a. Universal Design Summit, St Louis, 10/9-12: <http://stlouis.uds4.org/>

7. **Next meeting**: 1:30, Thursday, March 25, 606 E. Capitol, Jefferson City.