

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**January – December 2015**

### **Commissioners**

**Chairperson**

Joel Trambley, MD, PhD

**Vice Chairperson**

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PhD

**Mayoral**

Monica Bauer  
Dion Brown  
Mark Dillon  
Charles Gillig  
Shana Hazan  
Gagandeep Kaur  
Jessica Nare  
Lorena Slomanson

**Student Commissioner**

Lillian Shallow

**Council**

Dr. Gloria Harris (1)  
Mary Alcock (2)  
Joel Trambley (3)  
Tiffany Harrison (4)  
Dolores Canizales (5)  
Susan Thomson Tschirn, PhD (6)  
Vacant (7)  
Keryna Johnson (8)  
Godwin Higa (9)

Danell Scarborough, EdD  
Executive Director

Mike Giorgino  
Deputy City Attorney

## Message from Commission Chair Joel Trambley

San Diego has long been synonymous with temperate climate and sunny beaches. In recent years, we have become known for our innovations in biotechnology and craft beer. As we come into our own as a global city, it is time to highlight another of San Diego's assets: our diversity.

With Tijuana, Mexico just across the border, we are part of a truly bi-national metropolitan area. We are home to some of the largest Pan-Asian communities in America, have welcomed refugees from a number of countries, and were the first city to name a street after LGBT hero Harvey Milk.

The City of San Diego Human Relations Commission advises the Mayor and City Council on issues of equality and inclusion. We are proud to have worked on issues that unify and uplift our citizens, including fighting human trafficking, continuing a march toward more restorative justice practices, and ensuring family and gender inclusive restrooms. The Commission is also working with our elected leaders to ensure that new San Diegans can succeed here regardless of the path to their new home.

The Human Relations Commission believes that diversity is what brings us together, not what separates us. We ask for the continued help of San Diegans in supporting our efforts, and hope that visitors respect and enjoy the inclusive atmosphere of America's Finest City.

## 2015 Annual Report

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### I. Overview of the Human Relations Commission

#### What is the Human Relations Commission?

The City of San Diego established the Human Relations Commission (HRC) in 1991 to advocate for equal opportunity and the prevention/elimination of discrimination city-wide. The HRC was originally a 15 member commission but was increased to 17 members with the addition of an appointment from Council District 9 and an additional Mayoral appointment. The HRC advises the Mayor and City Council on methods to ensure that all residents of the city have equal access to economic, political and educational opportunities, equal access to accommodations in all business establishments in San Diego, and equal service and protection by public agencies.

## **The Mission of the Human Relations Commission**

The mission of the San Diego Human Relations Commission is to conduct and promote activities that foster mutual understanding, respect and inclusion, to protect basic human and civil rights and to create an atmosphere that promotes amicable relations among all members of the San Diego community.

## **The Commission's Statement of Purpose**

We are a volunteer commission, chartered by the Mayor and City Council of San Diego to inform and advise them on civil and human rights issues. We solicit, inform, and advocate for causes of social and racial justice and equality.

Our role is to help our diverse communities know each other, understand strengths and challenges, and empower all to work together to make our City vibrant.

We advocate for mutual respect amongst the diversity of San Diego's communities.

We support and recognize community leaders that exemplify the HRC vision.

We educate and sensitize City government, elected officials and appointed officials on issues affecting our diverse inhabitants.

## **Meeting Schedule and Agendas**

The HRC meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. The HRC typically meets in the Santa Fe Room of the Balboa Park Club in Balboa Park. Occasionally the location is moved to a community-based organization depending on the topic or outreach initiative. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the HRC's website <http://www.sandiego.gov/human-relations>

## **II. 2015 Highlights**

### **A. Commission Priority Issues**

Each year the HRC holds a planning retreat to identify concerns in the city that the Commissioners select to focus their work around for the coming year. Committees then organize actions and activities to address these issues. A Planning Retreat, open to the public, was held on February 25, 2015. The Commission heard a presentation on the City of San Diego's Strategic Plan and discussed ways to support the goals. These priority issues were identified for 2015:

1. Global Perspective
2. Equity
3. Safe and Just Communities
4. Homelessness

### **Global Perspective**

The HRC presented a proposal for the creation of the Office of New San Diegans to the Mayor's office. The City created the New San Diegan Resource Center website, which the Commission welcomes as a first step towards the Office of New San Diegans.

The HRC is a member of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium (SDIRC). As a member of the SDIRC, HRC has been part of many initiatives including the press conference to support the San Diego Hate-Free Zone Statement on October 28, 2015.

The HRC sent a letter in support of the City Council's adoption of a resolution in support of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action of Parent of Childhood Arrivals (DAPA) on June 26, 2015.

The HRC sent a letter of support for ongoing accessibility and funding for Friendship Park at Border Field State Park on June 17, 2015.

Commissioners participated in a day-long Guided Tour by the US Border Patrol of the US-Mexico Border on September 9, 2015.



## **Equity**

The Human Relations Commission held a joint meeting with the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention to receive presentations on Human Trafficking and Gang Involvement, and Restorative Justice on January 22, 2015 at Cherokee Point Elementary School. At the joint meeting, the two Commissions moved to convene a regional summit on Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices to raise awareness about this approach and their advantages for our community including victims, offenders, and society. The Commission facilitated planning sessions with multiple community stakeholders from January – December, 2015.

The HRC continued its focus on hunger and food sustainability in San Diego:

- Participated as a member of the Hunger Advocacy Network (HAN).
- Hosted HAN's Annual Elected Official's Breakfast at the Balboa Park Club April 29, 2015
- In recognition of Hunger Awareness Month, the Commission received a presentation on Hunger and Food Sustainability in San Diego at the September 16, 2015 meeting
- Participated in various Hunger Awareness Month activities

The HRC heard testimony, researched, and made recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and Chief Operating Officer regarding guidelines for the City in addressing Gender Neutral Restroom facilities on June 24, 2015.



**Safe and Just Communities**

The HRC led a coalition (including the San Diego Regional Hate Crimes Coalition, KPBS, ADL, and the District Attorney’s Office) that presented a three part film and speaker series focused on education on hate crimes and reduction of hate-motivated behavior. The documentary films were produced as part of the Working Together for Safe, Inclusive Communities Initiative, a collaboration between Not In Our Town and the US Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The series included:

- Hate Crimes Training for Law Enforcement, January 15, 2015 at Recital Hall in Balboa Park. Films: Waking in Oak Creek and Lessons from a Hate Crimes Detective
- Working Together for Safe, Inclusive Communities for Interfaith Community, February 5, 2015 at the Central Library Auditorium. Film: Waking in Oak Creek
- Not on Our Campus, March 12, 2015 at SDSU Aztec Student Union Theater. Films: A Bowling Green Legacy and Ole Miss: Facing the Change

The Commission convened a panel presentation on police-community relations entitled “Reflecting on Ferguson, Staten Island, and Cleveland: What would happen in San Diego?” on March 18, 2015. Panel members included SDPD Chief Shelley Zimmerman, District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis, and SDUSD Race/Human Relations & Advocacy Director Agin Shaheed.



The Commission convened a panel presentation on Black Lives Matter: Local Perspectives and Actions moderated by Commissioner Tiffany Harrison on October 21, 2015. Panel members

included Alyssa Smith, Vice President, NAACP California-Hawaii Youth & College Division, Dr. Charles Toombs, Chair, African studies Department, SDSU, Chris Wilson, Associate Director, Alliance San Diego, and a representative from Reclaiming the Community.

The HRC continued its involvement in anti-human trafficking efforts:

- Participated in the San Diego County Human Trafficking/CSEC Advisory Council and the Lawyer's Club Human Trafficking Committee
- Received a presentation on Gang involvement in Human Trafficking – A Pimp's Perspective, on the City Attorney's Office Prostitution Impact Panel, and on the San Diego County Regional Human Trafficking and CSEC Advisory Council Report and Recommendations
- Participated in formation of a new coalition to address the demand side of the issue
- Received a presentation by the Demand Abolition Coalition on efforts underway in our region on June 17, 2015
- Provided technical assistance to the District Attorney and US Attorney in presenting the October 15, 2015 session on Combatting Human Trafficking – Labor Trafficking Symposium at the Balboa Park Club

The HRC voted to support the Anti-Defamation Leagues' 50 States Against Hate Initiative on August 15, 2015. Goals of this initiative include: enacting hate crime laws in all 50 states, making existing state laws more inclusive and comprehensive, enhancing training for law enforcement personnel, improving law enforcement data collection and reporting, and educating communities regarding effective responses to hate violence and building trust in police-community relations.

### **Homelessness**

The Commission participated in the WeAllCount Homeless Count on January 29, 2015. Supporting the work to document the homeless population in San Diego.

The HRC conducted research with Housing Commission about educational programs and materials available to first time home buyers.

### **Communications**

The Commission developed and approved a Social Media Strategy and Implementation Guide to increase the Commission's visibility, information-sharing, and to promote programs and events.

## **B. Policy Recommendations**

One of the duties of the HRC is to advise the Mayor and City Council on issues within the jurisdiction of the Commission. The following letters were sent in 2015:

- Letters resulting from Joint Meeting between Human Relations Commission and Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention (March 17, 2015) include:
- To the Mayor requesting training be provided to City Staff on Human Trafficking
- To the Police Chief recommending line-up training for all SDPD Patrol Officers on the signs of youth and adults being trafficked

- To the Mayor and Chair of County Board of Supervisors urging implementation of recommendations put forth in the SD County Regional Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Advisory Report of October 2014
- To the Mayor and Police Chief requesting a report on SDPD suppression activities related to gangs and human trafficking
- To the Police Chief and Sheriff urging support for rehabilitation services and resources for pimps
- To the Mayor and City Council urging support for Restorative Justice Programs and Practices in San Diego
- Letter to Mayor and City Council urging their action on creating single-stall, gender neutral restrooms in City facilities (June 24, 2015)
- Letter to the Mayor and City Council noting the Human Relations Commission's Statement on Religious Freedom Restoration Acts and encouraging them to adopt a similar position (June 25, 2015)
- Letter to the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families supporting application for grant for domestic victims of human trafficking for San Diego County (August 13, 2015)
- Letters to the Congressional Delegation encouraging support for the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 to ensure all citizens can participate in our democracy (September 1, 2015)
- Letter to the San Diego Unified School District Trustees and Superintendent Marten urging the District to use its procedure for community dialogue regarding changing the name of Robert E. Lee Elementary School (September 1, 2015)
- Letter to Governor Brown urging his signature on SB 10 creating the Governor's Office of New Americans (April 15, 2015)
- Letter to City Councilmembers serving on the Smart Growth and Land Use Committee and the County Board of Supervisors urging their support for the implementation of AB 551: Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones Act in the City of San Diego (November 13, 2015)
- Letter to the Mayor and City Council urging their leadership in making it clear that hate threats and hate-motivated behavior will not be tolerated here and declaring San Diego a "Hate-Free Zone" (November 20, 2015)

## **C. Representing the City/Commissioners Activities**

### Community Events

Commissioners regularly attend community event, forums, activities representing the Commission and the City. A sampling of these include:

- Hunger Advocacy Network Legislative Breakfasts
- Learning Landscapes: The Future of Education in San Diego
- The Future of Age-Friendly Communities
- Center for Policy Initiatives Fellows Program

- University of San Diego Peace and Justice Institute panel titled “The Moral Panic over the Border and Immigration”
- Aaron Price Fellows graduation ceremony
- Restoring Respect Conference

### Community Breakfasts

Commissioners participated in these annual Community Breakfasts:

- United African American Ministerial Action Council’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast (January 16, 2015)
- MLK All People’s Celebration (January 16, 2015)
- Las Mananitas/Cesar Chavez Service Clubs Breakfast (March 27, 2015)
- Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast (May 21, 2015)

### Collaborations and Connections

Commissioners also serve as bridges to other boards and collaborations with similar goals. This provides a two-way exchange of information and the communication enhances all our work. A sampling of the other community groups that Commissioners are actively involved with include:

- First 5 CA (not local, but relevant to HRC)
- Foothold Foundation
- Hunger Advocacy Network
- Linda Vista Kindergarten Readiness Network
- Women Give San Diego
- Run Women Run
- Junior League of San Diego
- The Jessie's Program (a program through probation and the San Diego County Office of Education)- mentoring for young incarcerated women
- San Diego LGBT Center
- San Diego Continuing Education Foundation
- America's Finest City Softball League
- Environmental Health Coalition (Fund Development Committee)
- County of San Diego Social Services Advisory Board

### Visiting Dignitaries

The Human Relations Commission is proud to be called upon to represent the City of San Diego as dignitaries visit our city.

The Commission hosted a Department of State International Visitors Leadership Program delegation from Eastern Europe focused on LGBT Issues on August 20, 2015 in the Community Concourse. A panel of speakers shared current efforts and issues in San Diego and had a rich exchange with the visitors.

The Commission hosted a Department of State International Visitors Leadership Program from several countries across the Middle East focused on Human Trafficking on August 26, 2016 in the Community Concourse. A panel of local experts joined Commissioners for presentations and dialogue with the visitors.





## D. Recognition and Awards

One of the ways the Commission influences positive action in San Diego is by acknowledging and honoring people and programs doing good work in alignment with the Commission's goals.

### The Ashley L. Walker Social Justice Award

This award has established to honor a former HRC Executive Director and longtime community activist, Ashley Walker. This award recognizes and honors an individual, group, business, or community-based organization for their work in promoting peace, social justice, and human and civil rights in our community. The award is presented annually at the MLK All People's Celebration on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday. On January 18, 2015, the Commission was pleased to honor Carmen Chavez, Executive Director of Casa Cornelia for her work.



## Human Relations Commission Annual Recognition Ceremony and Reception

The Commission hosts an annual event to honor individuals and organization who have contributed in a significant way to the increase in diversity, equity, and inclusion in San Diego. The vision of this ceremony is to highlight the work of local people doing exceptional work and to celebrate with their family and friends the positive difference they are making in our community. Through sponsorships the Commission is able to offer this at no cost to the approximately 120 people who attend.

This year on November 16, 2015 in the Shiley Special Events Suite at the Central Library the Commission was pleased to honor these outstanding awardees.

- Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award – Ms. Cheryl Perez

The Commission acknowledges a person for their military service and service to our community. In honor of a former Commissioner, WWII veteran, prisoner of war, Purple Heart recipient, and community activist Keith Turnham.

- Corporate and Business Champions of Diversity Award- Cox Communications and Mr. Mark Kassab

The Commission acknowledges a business and corporation for its focus on diversity and inclusion in its organizational philosophy demonstrated through its leadership, employment practices, corporate giving and/or community engagement.

- Commission Partner Awards – Bread and Roses Center for Feminist Research and Activism at San Diego State University, the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention, San Diego County Social Services Advisory Board

This award honors those who have worked closely with the Human Relations Commission through the year on priority issues, acknowledging that partnerships are key to accomplishing positive change in the community.

- Commission Commendations – Pastor Sara Haldeman-Scarr, Mr. Ray King, Ms. Trinh Le, Mr. Connor Maddocks, Mr. Viet Mai, Mama's Kitchen, Reverend Jessica Strysko, Mr. Leon Williams, and the family of Mr. Mike Hardin

The Commission acknowledges the work of individuals and organization who promote activities that foster mutual respect and understanding and protect basic human and civil rights for ALL residents.



### **Human Relations Commission Commendations in the Community**

Throughout the year, Commissioners identify people and events to recognize with a Commendation. This year these have included:

- Lynn Sharpe Underwood for service as Executive Director of Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention (January 22, 2015)
- Day of Compassion “Heroes of Compassion” (May 30, 2015)
- Dia De Los Muertos (November 1, 2015)
- Standing Together in Peace (November 15, 2015)

### **E. Community Collaborations and Technical Assistance**

Partnering with other community-based organizations, standing in solidarity with, showing support via participation, promoting collaboration, and providing technical assistance where needed are powerful tools in the Commission’s tool box.

The Commission hosted the Inter-Religious Council’s Storytelling Event “The Golden Rule” at the Central Library Auditorium on April 26, 2015.

The Commission supported the Day of Compassion at Cherokee Point Elementary School on May 30, 2015.

Commissions participated in the Restoring Respect’s 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Restoring Civility to Civic Dialogue on March 27, 2015 at the University of San Diego.

### **F. Training and Conferences**

The Commission receives regular training from City Attorney’s Office on The California Brown Act and the Commission’s responsibilities regarding open meetings and transparent decision making. This training was delivered on July 15, 2015.

The California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO) is the state-wide organization that brings together the work of human relations organization (commissions and community-based) up and down California. Our Executive Director has served as chair of CAHRO for the past four years. The regional convenings and the annual state-wide conference are educational and networking opportunities the Commissioners regularly participate in. This year Commissioners participated in conferences in Oakland, Riverside, and Los Angeles.

## **G. Complaints of Discrimination**

The Human Relations Commission is authorized to accept, investigate, and mediate discrimination complaints. The HRC works with our assigned Deputy City Attorney to evaluate the validity of the discrimination. Where the complaint does not rise to the level of legal discrimination, the complaint is not within our jurisdiction (outside the City of San Diego), or mediation is not successful, referrals are made to more appropriate resource people and agencies in the community.

In 2015, 10 complaints were received and reviewed. All complainants were provided referral resources relevant to their specific area of concern. In two cases, action was taken to investigate the situation and to successfully resolve the complaint.

## **III. Conclusion**

The Human Relations Commission is dedicated to building community by fostering respect, resolving conflict, pursuing equality, and promoting diversity and inclusion in order to make San Diego a better place for all people to live, work, go to school, and do business. Our work is in support of the City's vision to be a World Class City for All.