



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Minutes

Commission Meeting of November 18, 2015 2015 Annual Recognition Ceremony and Reception

Welcome and Call the Meeting to Order

Joel Trambley, Chair welcomed all to the 8th annual recognition event, and called to order the November 2015 Commission meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Trambley acknowledged and thanked former Commission Chairs Nicole Murray Ramirez, who started this event, and Bruce Abrams, who continued to nurture the event.

Chair Trambley, also thanked the Central Library whom has hosted our event for the 2nd year, one of the true gems of America's Finest City.

Chair Trambley, gave a brief overview of the Mission Human Relations Commission. of the is to 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. In the past year, we have taken numerous steps toward our goals of Equity, Diversion and Inclusion, including working to bring gender inclusive restrooms to city buildings, development of a website to assist newly arrived San Diegans, participating in Hunger Action Month, and educating ourselves and the community on the Black Lives Matter movement.

Every year, hundreds of San Diegans join our efforts to improve Human Relations in America's Finest City. The agenda is to honor individuals and organizations who have made especially important contributions to understanding, respect, healing, safety, and inclusion across our City, making it a better place for ALL San Diegans to live, work, and do business.

We continue to use the theme "*SIMUNYE*", a Zulu word meaning "*we are one*, because "*We*" are one San Diego community, celebrating our progress on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Chair Trambley asked for a moment of silence to remember those still in pain or in need.

Roll Call

Commissioners in attendance:

Joel Trambley, Chair
Susan Thomson-Tschirn, Vice Chair
Monica Bauer, Commissioner
Mark Dillon, Commissioner
Lorena Slomanson, Commissioner
Lillian Shallow, Commissioner
Dion Brown, Commissioner
Shana Hazen, Commissioner
Jessica Nare, Commissioner
Tiffany Harrison, Commissioner
Keryna Johnson, Commissioner
Dolores Canizales, Commissioner
Godwin Higa, Commissioner

SDSU Community Music School - Both children and adults from SDSU's Community Music School played various instruments during this time.

Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award - Commissioner Shana Hazan presenting

Keith M. Turnham was a World War II veteran, prisoner of war, torchbearer in the 2002 Olympic Torch Relay, and author. Keith was a Purple Heart honoree and flew seven strategic bombing missions into Germany in 1944. When his plane was involved in a mid-air collision, Keith bailed out only to be captured and sent to a German prison camp. He detailed his story in his book, Death Denied.

Upon his return to San Diego he devoted his life to community service including eight (8) years as a HRC Commissioner, and membership in numerous community groups. His commitment and service are worthy of on-going recognition.

Commissioner Shana Hazan Acknowledged Mrs. Genny Turnham whose health did not allow her presence tonight. Those who have been with us in previous years likely remember her joyful presence, and she is missed as an important part of our Commission family.

Purpose of Award – The Human Relations Commission established this award to honor a former HRC Commissioner and dedicated community activist, Keith M. Turnham. It recognizes and honors an individual who is a veteran and is involved in public and community service. We appreciate their military service to our country and their work in promoting human and civil rights in our community.

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

Ms. Cheryl Perez is a tireless advocate for all veterans and their families. She has been involved in the Purple Heart Program for over ten years, has served as their president three different times, and is their current Vice President. The mission of the program is to foster an environment of goodwill and camaraderie among combat wounded veterans, promote patriotism, support legislative initiatives and provide service to all veterans. Cheryl was instrumental in acquiring the Purple Heart Monument at the entrance to the Veterans Museum and Memorial. Ms. Perez took an active role in the bringing the exhibit 'Remember the Fallen Heroes' to the city library which depicted 714 pictures of the FALLEN HEROES of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Ms. Perez personally met and provided pictures to numerous mothers. She coordinates the annual U.S. Marine program, "Toy for Tots" where she contacts numerous sources to collect over 45,000 toys, which is the largest collector in the County. She also personally prepares toys for two Christmas parties at Camp Pendleton and Balboa. She organizes essay contest in schools that get students to write essays entitled "Why it is important to thank a VETERAN". As the widow of a proud Marine, Cheryl knows the importance of support and encouragement in sustaining the wellbeing of our veterans.

Corporate Diversity Award - Commissioner Monica Bauer presenting

Purpose of Award – With this award, the Commission acknowledges a business or corporation for its focus on diversity and inclusion in its organizational philosophy demonstrated through its corporate leadership, employment policies, corporate giving and/or community initiatives.

Corporate Award Honoree – Cox Communications

Cox Communications strives to have an inclusive workplace where differences are welcomed and respected. Diversity and inclusion enable Cox Communications to engage and connect with their people. They provide products and services that fit the needs of diverse customers, suppliers and support and connect with the diverse communities they serve. Cultivating partnerships with diversity organizations, of both national and local focus allows them to reach their social responsibility objectives more broadly. Cox's commitment to diversity ensures the needs and priorities of their people; customers, vendors and communities are reflected in their company's vision. Cultivating partnerships with diversity organizations, of both national and local focus allows them to reach their social responsibility objectives precisely.

Business Diversity Award - Commissioner Godwin Higa presenting

Purpose of Award – With this award, the Commission acknowledges a business for its focus on diversity and inclusion in its organizational philosophy demonstrated through its leadership and engagement in community initiatives.

Business Award Honoree – Mark Kassab

Mark Kassab, an Iraqi-born Catholic who came to this country with \$5 in his pocket, is a successful entrepreneur who co-owns two supermarkets in City Heights. Mark Kassab was born

and raised in Iraq. He immigrated to San Diego in 1977 and after settling in the San Carlos neighborhood of San Diego as a 17-year-old, Mark attended Patrick Henry High School and worked at a grocery store. Not long after graduating from high school, Mark heard through a friend that Murphy's Market on Fairmount Avenue was for sale. At the youthful age of 20, three years removed from landing in the United States with \$5 in his pocket, Mark was the proud co-owner of a business. Mark Kassab has become a well-respected community member. He was honored on April 2, 2002, when the City of San Diego proclaimed it Mark Kassab Day. He has generously donated more than 1,500 books to local literacy programs, gives away bicycles every year at an elementary school, sponsors a soccer team, regularly donates refreshments for community events, and participates every year in National Night Out crime fighting rallies.

Spoken Word Performance by Mr. Viet Mai

Commission Partner Awards

Chair Joel Trambley introduced and acknowledges that partnerships are key to accomplishing positive change in the community. The awardees are people or organizations that have worked closely with the Human Relations Commission through the year on priority issues.

Bread and Roses Center for Feminist Research and Activism – Commissioner Jessica Nare presenting

Bread and Roses at San Diego State University promotes feminist creativity, scholarship, and community engagement in support of the women's movement. They accomplish this mission by developing interdisciplinary, intersectional projects that foster women's economic, social and political empowerment. They promote internationalization and transnational feminist collaborations. Bread and Roses also builds a stronger local feminist community within the university and with other San Diego organizations. This organization links feminist theory to practice and trains future feminist advocates and professionals. This year, the Bread and Roses Center partnered with the Human Relations Commission to offer a community forum on the pressing issue of sexual violence in San Diego. This important event created opportunities for local universities to share best practices on the prevention of sexual assault and how to support survivors.

Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention – Vice Chair, Susan Thomson Tschirn presenting

The City of San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention's three strategic action goals are gang prevention, intervention, and suppression. The Commission has been engaged in multiple projects that address these goals and have had a great impact in the community. Some of these initiatives passing a Resolution in support of the Trauma Informed Approach to Addressing and Preventing Gang Violence, training over 500 city and county employees on trauma informed care, and hosting work readiness workshops and summer job fairs for the youth in partnership with Connect2Careers and Workforce Partnership. The Commission also serves as one of the partners of the Opportunity Network that addresses the need to inform parents of the risk of gang documentation upon the youth's first contact with an officer and referring these

families to wrap-around services. The Commission is currently partnering with the Human Relations Commission and collaborating with the community to put on a Restorative Justice and Restorative Practice Summit to educate the community about a new approach to dealing with offenders and victims.

San Diego Social Services Advisory Board – Commissioner Dion Brown presenting

The Social Services Advisory Board’s responsibilities are to provide program, policy, and process advice on how to move people from welfare dependency to self-sufficiency, to review and make recommendations on welfare reform measures, as well as to provide advice on policy and program changes related to the prevention of welfare fraud. They evaluate and make recommendations on the implementation procedures of State or federally mandated program changes and review and make recommendations regarding the provision of public welfare and welfare to work services. Due to the valuable work that the Social Services Advisory Board did with other stakeholders on the issue of San Diego County's Cal Fresh program, the county has seen an increase in access and satisfaction by recipients of this important program. The Human Relations Commission acknowledges the County and the Social Services Advisory Board’s investment and commitment to providing Cal Fresh benefits in a respectful manner to help alleviate hunger in our community.

HRC Commendations - Chair Joel Trambley

Purpose: The Human Relations Commission Commendations are our way of acknowledging people who have had not only a profound impact on the community but on us as well.

The people we honor with a Commendation have typically educated one or more of the Commissioners with the amazing work they do. They are too often unsung heroes, yet they are the people who change the world. It is our pleasure and honor to thank them, and there is more detailed information on their work in the program.

To the Family of Mike Hardin – Commissioner Lorena Slomanson presenting

Mike Hardin, better known as “Bossman” was a resident of Ocean Beach since he was 11. Mr. Hardin ran Hodad's with his late mother, Virginia Hardin, since the mid-1980s following his father's death. He was truly loved by the community. He supported veterans and hired people on parole. He and his friends traveled for years to bring a taste of home to the deployed through a nice, juicy burger. Mr. Hardin will be remembered for his kindness and generosity. A Navy chaplain described the first of many times Hardin showed up overseas to serve deployed service members. “As much as Mr. Hardin will be forever known for his burgers, those close to him say he will be most remembered for his generosity, unceasing kindness and charitable works, having contributed to local schools and in recent years traveled overseas preparing Hodad's burgers for U.S. troops.”

Pastor Sara Haldeman-Scarr- Commissioner Lorena Slomanson presenting

Pastor Sara Haldeman-Scarr was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and grew up in the Conestoga Church of the Brethren located in Bareville, PA. She spent many wonderful summers shaping her faith at Camp Swatara in Bethel, PA as a camper, counselor, and finally the Program Coordinator. Educated as an Elementary Education Major in undergraduate studies, she was

called to Ministry in 1981 after which it concluded her graduate studies with a Masters of Divinity at Bethany Theological Seminary. Pastor Sara was ordained in a joint service with her husband, Bill in 1987 and has served many congregations across the United States. They settled in San Diego at First Church of the Brethren in July of 2005. She has also served on the San Diego Peace Resource Center, the Interfaith Center for Worker Justice and regularly leads in organizing Days of Compassion and Standing for Peace Vigils in the community. She currently serves at the San Diego First Church of the Brethren as their Lead Pastor.

Mr. Ray King– Commissioner Tiffany Harrison presenting

Ray King has been President and CEO of the Urban League of San Diego County since October 2007. The Urban League of San Diego is the nation’s oldest and largest community-based movement devoted to empowering African Americans to enter the economic and social mainstream. Locally, the Urban League of San Diego County provides direct services to more than 7,000 people annually, countywide, through programs, advocacy and research. Prior to joining the Urban League, King worked in the corporate world as the general manager for marketing and operations of a transportation company that found him traveling to Asia, Europe and South America. He has a Master’s in Business Administration from Stanford Graduate School of Business and was appointed to an Education Commission by the Governor of California.

Ms. Trinh Le– Commissioner Tiffany Harrison presenting

Trinh Le currently works in Leadership Development at the Center on Policy Initiatives, a nonprofit research and advocacy center dedicated to the interests of working people in the San Diego region. She previously worked with the ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties, San Diego Asian Film Foundation, and Little Saigon Foundation. Trinh graduated from UCLA with a B.A. in Sociology and Asian American Studies. As a college student, she was heavily involved with organizations such as the Asian Pacific Coalition, Vietnamese Student Union, and the National Asian American Student Conference. Soon after college, she moved to the Mississippi Gulf Coast where she worked with the Vietnamese community and other low-income communities of color to rebuild and organize after Hurricane Katrina and then also after the BP Oil Spill disaster. She supported newly formed Asian American organizations by pushing to advance their local initiatives. After working for three years in the Gulf Coast, she decided that it was time to move back to San Diego where she is a valuable resource in our community.

Mr. Connor Maddocks – Commissioner Keryna Johnson presenting

Connor Maddocks has been doing advocacy and civil rights work in the San Diego Transgender community for the past 10 years. He is the lead facilitator of the San Diego Female-to-Male (FTM)/Significant Other (SO) Discussion Group and is an active guest speaker to various organizations, businesses, and colleges on Transgender issues. He has done extensive trainings on all aspects of the Transgender Community as well as workshops for the community on legal name and gender changes. He is a member of the Community Leadership Council in San Diego; Chair of the San Diego Day of Remembrance; and planning committee member of the Day of Empowerment. He is a former member of the San Diego Pride Board of Directors and an active volunteer of Pride for the past 10 years. Connor also works with the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department and San Diego Police Department trainings on Transgender issues. Connor is

currently employed by the San Diego LGBT Community Center as the Facilities Manager and was recently named Program Coordinator for the newly launched Project Trans at the San Diego LGBT Center.

Mr. Viet Mai - Youth Commissioner Lillian Shallow presenting

Viet Mai is an Educator, Artist and Consultant who works to enhance the lives of others through community engagement and youth empowerment. Viet Mai's mission is to collaborate with community members to educate, motivate, and inspire youth through spoken word, art, and culture. Viet obtained his BA in Math-Computer Science from UCSD. He currently serves as a Program Facilitator with the Village of Promise Collective Mentoring Program and as an Independent Consultant specializing in School Data and Assessment. In an effort to inspire others through art and culture, Viet is a co-host and organizer of San Diego's largest Spoken Word event, ELEVATED. As a member of the 2013 ELEVATED! Slam Team, he represented San Diego to rank 4th place at the National Poetry Slam in Boston, MA. Also known as Knowledge, Viet began performing spoken word around San Diego in 2001. As his talent and creativity bloomed, he was sought after as a featured poet at many events and venues in Southern California and across America.

Mama's Kitchen– Commissioner Dolores Canizales presenting

Mama's Kitchen was established in 1990 by Laurie Leonard. Laurie was a volunteer at a pantry for people living with AIDS, and noticed shoppers were becoming homebound—too weak to shop for or cook food. She enlisted a group of volunteers to help prepare and deliver free, home-cooked meals to people suffering from AIDS. Laurie lost her brother to AIDS, and chose to name the organization "Mama's Kitchen" to honor her mother, Edie. Mama's Kitchen is a nonprofit organization that prepares and delivers meals free of charge to residents of San Diego County who are affected by AIDS or cancer. They also operate Mama's Pantry, a food pantry for low-income, HIV positive people who are strong enough to shop for groceries, but who struggle with poverty and cannot shop regularly. At Mama's Kitchen their mission is that everyone is entitled to the basic necessity of life — nutritious food. Through these services, they are able to provide food, compassion and hope to over 1,400 people annually living throughout San Diego County.

Rev. Jessica Stryko– Commissioner Dolores Canizales presenting

Reverend Jessica Stryko grew up in Yucaipa, California, and was raised in the United Methodist Church there. She developed a deep love for God nurtured in the youth and camping ministries of her church. As a result of these ministries, she first felt God calling her to ministry at age 14, and has been living into this calling ever since. She attended the University of Redlands as an English Literature and Religious Studies double major and attended seminary at Harvard Divinity School. After graduation, Jessica was commissioned to serve at her first appointment, here at First UMC of San Diego. She was ordained an elder in the United Methodist Church in 2014. Rev. Jessica leads alongside many others, especially with the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Interfaith Service and with Cherokee Point Elementary School as they reach the needs of families in City Heights. She is dedicated to discerning God's active presence in the church and the world community, and therefore is passionate about inter-generational ministry, Christian Education, ecumenical/interfaith dialogue, and social justice.

Mr. Leon Williams– Commissioner Mark Dillon presenting

Leon Williams is a native of Oklahoma and the son of a farmer who moved his family to Bakersfield during the Great Depression. As far back as the 1970s, Leon Williams advocated for innovative, equitable and responsive public services. He felt San Diego should be reusing its older, inner neighborhoods and using efficient public-transportation networks, instead of pushing into undeveloped areas. He was a voice for police reform, advocating a community-based policing approach years before it was popular. He was an early advocate of a needle-exchange program to prevent the spread of AIDS and for limits on smoking in public places. He was a driving force behind the region's network of freeway emergency call boxes, a lifeline before the age of cell phones. He lobbied successfully for a county Human Relations Commission. His interest in public health led to a scholarship fund, administered by the San Diego Foundation, which assists college students studying health care. Williams' life of dedicated public stewardship included serving on the San Diego City Council, the County Board of Supervisors, and on the Metropolitan Transit System Board. A role model, mentor, visionary and tireless civic leader, all San Diegans have benefited from his servant leadership.

Closing Comments – Chair, Joel Trambley

Thank you for joining us to celebrate some of the people who help make San Diego America's Finest City. This ends our program and our evening with you, but it does not end our common mission. Please continue, and pass-on, the leadership, caring, commitment, respect, and inclusion we have seen honored tonight.

Adjourned: 7:30 PM

