

MOORHEAD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 2002 ANNUAL REPORT

The Moorhead Human Rights Commission (MHRC) was established in 1990 by City Ordinance to educate and inform the community on issues pertaining to human rights; to secure for all persons equal opportunity in education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and public services. In addition to the Commission's monthly meeting activities, individual members are involved in a variety of human rights work in the community.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Commission is to secure for all persons, whether residents or visitors equal opportunity in education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and public services and full participation for all Moorhead citizens in the affairs of this community.

The MHRC deals with the social issues of discrimination as pertains to human rights. This is relayed in the Minnesota Human Rights Act No. 363. The section prohibits discrimination in education, employment, housing and real property, public accommodations, public service, credit services, and business.

The Minnesota Human Rights Act makes it illegal to discriminate against a person because of:

- Race
- Color
- Creed
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Dependence on public assistance
- Disability
- Age
- Familial status

Mission

The mission of the Moorhead Human Rights Commission is to educate and advise the community on human rights issues.

Targeted Areas

US Commission on Civil Rights Report

- ❖ Moorhead Police Chief, Grant Weyland, Deputy Chief Wayne Arnold, Lt. Mike Kutzke, and members of the Public Safety Citizen Action Team met with the MHRC on February 8, 2002. The group discussed some of the major public safety action steps, beginning with recruitment, training, and hiring efforts to create a more diverse Police Department workforce.

- ❖ March 2002, the MHRC forwarded recommendations for Public Safety, Leadership Development and Civic Participation, and Human Rights Advocacy to the Moorhead City Council. (See appendix for full recommendations)
- ❖ The Moorhead Justice Circle received the 2001 Best Practices in Social Work and Social Services Award in the category of community organizations/community development sponsored by the Social Services InfoNet/CSA Social Services Abstracts for its work to address the report.
- ❖ **Note appendix 1 for statistics.**

Human Rights Awards/Martin Luther King Jr. Day

- ❖ On January 22, 2002, the MHRC hosted the sixth annual Human Rights Awards. Recipients were nominated by citizens in recognition of their contributions to this community in the furtherance of human rights. 2002 recipients are as follows:
 - ★ **Irene Hogan:** Irene Hogan has volunteered over 2000 hours at Meritcare by rocking the babies, filing in the office, and organizing activities and foods for children with Phenylkeponuria, an inherited enzyme defect, while they wait at the PKU Clinic. She is an active member of American Association University Women and a liaison to the Women's Network of the Red River Valley. For nine years Irene has volunteered with Moorhead English as a Second Language (ESL) for adults and at Probstfield with the English Language Learners (ELL) program. The latter won her 2001 Outstanding Lay Person in Education Award. Irene is also a member of International Women, President of the Home Economics Association, Secretary for Moorhead Area Retired Educators Association, and in 1997 she was elected Volunteer of the Year through her work at the Clay County Historical Society during the flood. Irene organizes numerous activities for Scandinavian Days and Cultivate the Cultures. She serves weekly at the Dorothy Day House. Irene has helped the Clay County Extension 4-H girls sew outfits for those who leave the hospital without clothes, takes pictures for Santa Joe's Christmas parties, and is a Moorhead Healthy Community Block Club co-captain. Further, Irene has worked tirelessly with the Justice Circles and is secretary of Trinity Lutheran's Anti-Racism Work Group.
 - ★ **Kassandra Erickson:** Since 1999, 11-year-old Kassandra has been giving speeches on behalf of the F-M Coalition for Homeless Persons, Dorothy Day House, F-M Hunger Coalition, and Churches United. Kassandra tells of her own homelessness when she was five and six years old. Presentations are for children, but she has spoken to adults as well as the media on occasion. Currently, Kassandra volunteers at the Dorothy Day House, Food Pantry, and Eventide.
 - ★ **Mujeres Unidas Youth Arts Project:** The 48 children who painted the mural are being honored for the time they dedicated to the community. The Mujeres Unidas Youth Arts Project helped to renovate the Riverfront Park Recreation building. A Twin Cities artist was hired to help with the design of the **Teoxochicalli** (pronounced Ta a so she ca le) **Mural**. The youth helped bring their concept of Aztec Culture and the appreciation thereof to the attention of the Moorhead community with their dedication to the project.

- ★ **St. Joseph's Charitable Concerns Committee:** The St. Joseph's Charitable Concerns Committee was founded in 1981 by Jack Lutgens and originally provided financial assistance only to members of the parish. The program has since expanded to include any resident of Cass and Clay Counties. Financial assistance is given on a one-time basis for emergency needs that cannot be met by insurance, public assistance, or other sources. Referrals are made to other agencies that may be of help. Committee members also have arranged for donations of necessary items such as clothing or furniture. Time has been volunteered to help families move or get to appointments. Annually, over \$4,500 is distributed to approximately 18 referrals. In the past 20 years, nearly \$90,000 has been disbursed. As no funds come from the church budget, St. Joseph's Charitable Concerns Committee raises most of their funds through fish dinners and other fundraisers. Individual contributions account for a small percent of their funding.

- ★ **Pastor Glenn Anderson and Audrey Anderson:** Pastor Glenn and Audrey have served in the parishes of Puposky, Glyndon, Battle Lake, and Houghlum Lutheran in Lake Park where Pastor Glenn recently retired after 22 years. Both are concerned with justice issues including poverty, hunger, rural concerns, and evangelism in the wider church. Pastor Glenn and Audrey are recognized with a Human Rights Award for their efforts to further human rights within the Lutheran church. They have led the congregation through the Reconciling in Christ program, which means the church will openly welcome all people regardless of sexual orientation. Houghlum is the first church in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA and the second in the Red River Valley to become affiliated with the RIC program.

- ★ **Joseph and Corrine Bennett:** In 1993, Joseph and Corrine saw a real need to pull the Morningside Greenwood neighborhood together. Thus began the yearly Santa Joe Christmas Party. Every child receives a gift from Santa and due to one child's suggestion, they each get to choose and wrap one gift for their parents. Santa letters are sent to each of the children in English or Spanish. The program started with the children and has grown to include many of the adults as well. The Morningside Greenwood Block Club now holds 300 plus members and has helped the neighborhood get its self-esteem back. Mr. And Mrs. Bennett are not afraid to knock on neighbors' doors to give invites or just to visit. The Bennetts have received little outside financial help for their endeavors. **The couple has also sponsored a soccer team and is working on involving all the surrounding neighborhoods in organized soccer leagues. Each year, they participate in National Night Out. The Bennetts have volunteered at the Dorothy Day House and Churches United for the Homeless. Many of their tenants come as referrals from these agencies. The Bennetts believe in non-discrimination and are willing to give people a chance. "If someone has committed a crime and paid for it, then it is in the past." They do not charge a deposit and allow tenants to pay on a daily basis if need be. Mr. Bennett has been a voice on committees regarding housing issues and is a compassionate friend to the needy. The Bennetts have received the Outstanding Neighbor Award, the Golden Rule Award, and the Moorhead Healthy Initiative Community Citizens Award.**

- ★ **Amy Phillips:** Amy Phillips has over fifteen years in Human Service work including

community education, organizing, advocacy, and family preservation. Amy was a driving force behind the successful two-day cultural competence symposia in April of 2000 for county human service staff and members of the Moorhead Latino Community. She is a founding member of the Moorhead Justice Circle, a group of Moorhead citizens examining ways to increase racial justice and equal opportunity in the Moorhead area. In response to the Minnesota Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission Report on The Status of Equal Opportunity for Minorities in Moorhead, Minnesota., Amy became a co-leader of the community study circle effort involving over 300 people. She was a major catalyst in the development of the January 2001 5-day cultural competence and anti-racism training for personnel of the Moorhead Police Department and Clay County Social Services.

On campus Amy has co-founded TOCAR (Training Our Campuses Against Racism), a major multiyear movement to provide anti-racism training to the faculty and staff at Minnesota State University Moorhead, Concordia College, Northwest Technical College, and North Dakota State University. Amy has assisted in the development of anti-oppression curricula, and in developing more diversity in staff and students. As a professor, Amy incorporates significant anti-oppression content, training, and service learning projects in the Social Work classes she teaches at MSUM. As she teaches students about their roles and responsibilities as a social worker, she instills in them her love for human rights issues. Amy empowers others to become leaders while providing support, ideas, and encouragement.

Cultural Diversity Awareness

- * Buscher, Davies, Arett, and Yak visited with Kristi Rudelius-Palmer, Co-director of the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center on February 7, 2002. She discussed different resources available for Human Right Centers.
- * March-Tammie Yak met with Chivy Sok from the University of Iowa Human Rights Center. She was very helpful and interested in what we are trying to accomplish in the Fargo-Moorhead area. She has agreed to be contacted for any further assistance.
- * April-MSUM held the Seventh Annual Unity Conference

Fair Housing

- ❖ July-The MHRC has reviewed the Justice Circle Final Report of Recommendations for fair Housing and Public Accommodations.

Public Awareness Activities

- ❖ Moorhead Human Rights Commission co-sponsored a community event hosted by the FHRC, to honor the legacy of civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on January 21, 2002. The event was held at the Fargo Theatre and included filming of the "I Have a Dream" speech and music by the Trollwood Performing Arts Multicultural Children's Choir.
- ❖ Tri-College Human Rights Conference held at NDSU, MSUM, and Concordia in April.
- ❖ Moorhead Human Rights Commission finalized their Hate Motivated Crime and Incident

Response Plan.

- ❖ MHRC sponsored an event hosted by Cultural Diversity Resources on October 11, 2002 on Building a Human Rights Community: A Conversation with American Indians at NDSU.

MEMBERSHIP

The Commission began the year with eight members:

Roger Buscher	Andrew Conteh	Mary Davies
Rick Henderson	Brian Arett	Alicia Rodriguez
Lynne Kovash	Brad Nordhougen	
Greg Lemke (ex officio member)		

Additional members appointed in 2002:

Alex Lodu Kenyi
Martha Cavasos
Aisha Saliah

Resignations in 2002:

Greg Lemke(elected to the City Council; now serves as ex-official member)

Officers were elected in April:

Brian Arett, Chair
Alicia Rodriguez, Vice-Chair
Roger Buscher, Secretary

The Commission held **ten** regular meetings in 2002.

*Greg Lemke, Fourth Ward City Council Member, served as an ex officio member of the MHRC.

*The Human Rights Commission was staffed by Lisa Vatnsdal and Intern, Tammie Yak

*Membership included persons from protected classes under the Minnesota Human Rights Act No. 363 including race, color, sexual orientation, age, and disability.

CITIZENS CONCERNS/GRIEVANCES

- ❖ A MAT Paratransit driver was accused by a passenger of being a terrorist connected to Osama bin Ladin. The passenger filed a police report and a complaint to the FBI. Lisa Vatnsdal reviewed the matter with Mass Transit staff and referred the driver to Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota.
- ❖ A Native American mother expressed concern about the portrayal of a Native American in a Boy Scout presentation. The mother and her children were offended. Members of the Commission met with the family and the Boy Scouts. The National Boy Scouts have a no face-paint policy. The local Boy Scouts have agreed to follow this guideline in the future. The Commission concurred that the presentation was not intended to offend Native American persons, but that there should be more consideration given to cultural perspectives.

- ❖ A citizen expressed concern regarding and employment issue. Walter McDuffy mediated the concern.
- ❖ Rick Henderson gave referral contact information to an individual alleging discrimination involving legal representation.
- ❖ A citizen expressed concern regarding Churches United for the Homeless related to child supervision.

FORUMS/PRESENTATIONS

- ❖ On, February 27, 2002 members of the MHRC met with Kristi Rudelius-Palmer, Co-Director of the U of M Human Rights Center to learn about the different human rights resources available.
- ❖ Rick Henderson participated in a panel presentation, “Human Rights at the Grass Roots: a Town Hall Meeting”, on April 18, 2002.

FUTURE EFFORTS

- ❖ Community Summit
- ❖ Relocate Mujeres Unidas
- ❖ Conversational Events

Appendix 1

The US Civil Rights Report was released in January 2001. It outlined several statistics on employment, housing, and arrests, which can be measured over time to track progress in improving equal opportunity. In 2002, the Moorhead Police Department is participating in a state racial tracking program, the results of which will be published in future reports. Other statistics will be reported in this and future reports.

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

City of Moorhead Public Employment Full-Time

	January 1, 2001- December 31, 2001	January 1, 2002- December 31, 2002
Male	73.3% 179	76.6% 174
Female	26.6% 65	23.3% 53
White (non-Latino)	97.5% 238	97.8% 222
Latino	2.0% 5	1.8 4
American Indian	0	0
Black	0	0
Asian	0.4% 1	0.4% 1
Total Full-Time	244	227

Source: City of Moorhead Human Resources

City of Moorhead Public Employment Part-time Temporary/Seasonal

	January 1, 2001- December 31, 2001		January 1, 2002- December 31, 2002	
Male	52.2%	82	49.6%	64
Female	47.7%	75	50.4	65
White (non-Latino)	91.7%	144	93.3%	123
Latino	6.3%	10	3.9%	5
American Indian		0	.84%	1
Black	1.2%	2	0	0
Asian	0.6%	1	0	0
Total Part-Time Temporary/Seasonal		157		252

Source: City of Moorhead Human Resources

City of Moorhead General Population

	Census 1990		Census 2000	
Male	46.5%	15,033	46.9%	15,096
Female	53.4%	17,262	53.1%	17,081
White (non-Latino)	95.3%	30,786	90.1%	29,001
Latino	2.7%	890	4.5%	1,439
American Indian	1.3%	441	1.9%	625
Black	0.4%	152	0.8%	247
Asian	1.0%	355	1.3%	410
Total Population		32,295		32,177

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S.Census

EDUCATION

Students and Teachers in the Moorhead Public Schools, by Race and Ethnicity

	Student Percent	Professional Percent March 2002**		
White	N/A	97%		
Latino	N/A	1.96%		
American Indian	N/A	.46%		
Black	N/A	.12%		
Asian	N/A	.46%		
Total Population	N/A	868		

Source: **The Status of Equal Opportunity for Minorities in Moorhead, Minnesota* report from the Minnesota Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

**Moorhead Public Schools Human Resources

Students in the Moorhead College System, by Race and Ethnicity

STUDENT	MSUM *		Concordia **	Northwest Tech ***
	Fall 2002 Undergraduate	Graduate		
White	6875	406	2539	NA
Latino	71	3	17	NA
American Indian	98	4	12	NA
Black	42	0	19	NA
Asian	55	2	41	NA
International Students	177	5	165	NA
Total Population	7318	420	2775	NA

Source: *Director of Institutional Research Academic Affairs Office

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***NA

Faculty in the Moorhead College System, by Race and Ethnicity

FACULTY	MSUM * FY 2002-2003	Concordia **	Northwest Technical College*** 2002-2003	
			Full Time/ Part Time	Adjunct
White	300	NA	62	25
Latino	3	NA	0	0
American Indian	4	NA	0	1
Black	10	NA	0	0
Asian	17	NA	0	0
Total Population	334	NA	63	26

Source: *Director of Institutional Research Academic Affairs Office

**NA

***Northwest Technical College Human Resources

PUBLIC SAFETY

In **January of 2002**, the Moorhead Police Department released the **December 2001** Report to the Community in order to summarize where they have been as a law enforcement agency, where they are at, and where they are going. One important factor is hiring and retention of minority officers.

Moorhead Police Department Demographics

2002	Sworn Police Officers	Non-sworn Employees
Male	34	NA
Female	3	NA
White	36	NA
Latino	1	NA
American Indian	0	NA
Black	0	NA
Asian	0	NA
Total	37	NA

Source: Moorhead Police Department December 2002 Report to the Community

HOUSING AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

TENURE BY RACE OF HOUSEHOLDER

2000 OWNER OCCUPIED	Moorhead	Minnesota	United States
White	7,240	1,353,488	59,693,948
Black or African American	13	17,628	5,577,734
American Indian/Alaska Native	29	8,207	426,782
Asian	41	18,875	1,672,460
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	223	46,877
Other	62	6,040	1,537,336
Two or More Races	45	8,404	860,616
Total	7,430	1,412,865	69,815,753

Source: U.S. Census 2000

TENURE BY RACE OF HOUSEHOLDER

1990 OWNER OCCUPIED	Moorhead	Minnesota	United States
White	6,592	1,158,606	52,432,648
Black	15	9,654	4,327,265
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	26	6,085	318,001
Asian or Pacific Islander	19	7,101	1,050,182
Other Race	12	2,227	896,715
Total	6,664	1,183,673	59,024,811

Source: U.S. Census 1990