



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose

Since 1963, the St. Mary's County Human Relations Commission (HRC) has been empowered to promote understanding and harmony of relationships between the people of the county and to use its influence and persuasion to direct the community's efforts to the solution of problems that cause racial and other tensions stemming from acts of discrimination within the county.

Activities

The HRC co-sponsored the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast held at St. Mary's College of Maryland by attending planning meetings and assisting with public relations. HRC continues to work with St. Mary's College in their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts on campus. The HRC partnered with the College to screen the documentary "13th", which was followed by a panel discussion.

Challenges

The membership continues to struggle with ways to accomplish its goals of advocating for human/civil rights and cultural diversity. Several ideas have been discussed, but a dwindling membership continues to be a challenge, as an active membership is necessary to carry out some of the activities that have been discussed.

Plans

The following are some ideas that have been discussed in order to make the HRC more relevant in these turbulent times:

1. Serve as a neutral forum for investigating conflicts in the community, such as within the school system or county government.

2. On behalf of the Board of County Commissioner's assess the diversity, equity and inclusion environment within county government and issue a report and recommendations.
3. Partner with other human services organizations to convene public conversations regarding human relations and conflict resolution.

Membership as of December 31, 2017

Joshua Brewster, Co-Chair (2nd Term ends June 2021)
Vante Burkes, Co-Chair (1st term ends June 2018)
Wayne Lockley (2nd term ends June 2018)
Deborah Dennie (2nd term ends June 2018)
Mary Ferns (2nd term ends June 2021)
Joanna Colvin (1st term ends June 2018)
Gary Younger (1st term ends December 2018)
Jesus Godinez (1st term ends December 2018)
Steve Hall (partial term ends Dec. 2018)