

NEW YORK CITY

COMMISSION ON
HUMAN RIGHTSMAYOR
MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

CCHR NEWSLETTER

COMMISSIONER
PATRICIA L. GATLING

New Staten Island Office Opens

In September 2003, Commissioner Patricia L. Gatling officially opened the Staten Island Community Service Center, marking the first time in the 48-year history of the Commission that every borough has its own permanent field office.

The Staten Island Community Service Center is located in the St. George section of Staten Island at 60 Bay Street and is easily accessible by public transportation. The Service Center has a multi-lingual staff that can respond to the rapidly diversifying population on Staten Island. It is the first field office to have a staff attorney assigned, which allows the office to handle the intake and the investigation of complaints.

"Mayor Bloomberg and the Commission are committed to using all of our resources to ensure that the people of this City do not become hostages to prejudice," said Commissioner Gatling. "This new office will be used to educate, mediate and enforce the strongest anti-bias law in the country. Our message is a simple one: "Discrimination will not be tolerated in our City."

Upon arriving at CCHR, Commissioner Gatling quickly identified a need for a field office in Staten Island and began planning for it immediately. For years, the borough fell under the jurisdiction of the Manhattan

field office.

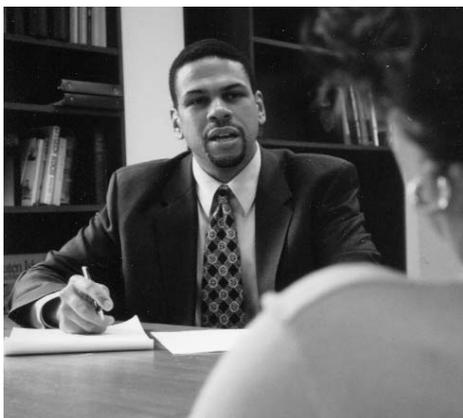
Since its opening, the office has offered all of the Commission's services including: the investigation and intake of discrimination complaints; Mortgage Foreclosure and Pre-Purchase Counseling; Human Rights and Conflict Resolution workshops in school and community settings; Peer Mediation training in selected schools; Community Mediation; Project Equal Access, an investigation and intervention program for those with disabilities; and Immigrant Employment Rights Training.

"The Service Center, with all the programs the Commission offers, will be a touchstone for social change and cultural awareness on Staten Island," said Commissioner Gatling. At the opening of the new office, Commissioner Gatling quoted Charlayne Hunter-Gault, a prominent journalist and the first African-American woman to gain admission and graduate from the University of Georgia, who said "If people are informed, they will do the right thing. It is when they are not informed that they become hostages to prejudice."

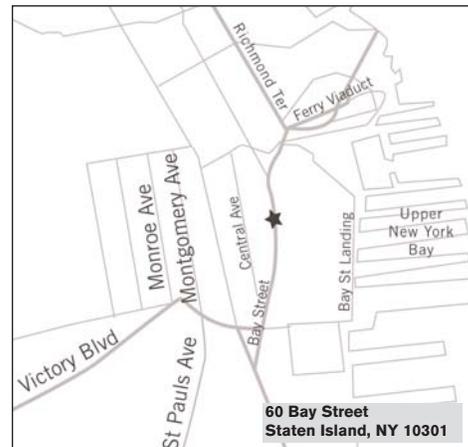
The Staten Island staff includes some of the Commission's most experienced and multi-lingual members: Director Roy Pingel, Deputy Director Alex Korkhov, Staff Attorney Paul Labossiere and Human Rights Specialists David Lopez and Mark Heron.



Top: Commissioner Gatling, joined by Councilmember M. McMahon (left) and SI Borough President J. Molinaro, at office opening. Above: Staten Island office director Roy Pingel (left) and deputy director Alex Korkhov. Below: CCHR's Staten Island office location.



Staff attorney Paul Labossiere speaks with a complainant during Intake at CCHR's new Community Service Center.



60 Bay Street
Staten Island, NY 10301



MOVING FORWARD

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

The Commission eliminated the 5,000 case backlog, allowing us to increase our services to the public and help make New York the greatest City in the world, particularly after the troubling times post 9/11.

The Commission's Law Enforcement Bureau has negotiated over 300 modifications for individuals with disabilities and obtained in excess of 2.3 million dollars for victims of discrimination since 2002.

During this same time period, CCHR's Community Relations Bureau opened its first permanent Community Service Center in Staten Island; instituted a major initiative informing immigrant employees about the protections they have against employment discrimination under the law, as well as training employers on the Human Rights Law; developed community and peer mediation services, including the

training of middle and high school students to be peer mediators; and expanded CCHR's Project Equal Access Program and the Pre-Purchase and Mortgage Counseling services.

In the coming year, the Commission's Law Enforcement Bureau will focus on resolving the Commission's remaining "older" cases in order to bring a just resolution without further delay. At the end of FY 2002, there were 1,168 cases seven years or older. By the end of FY 2003, that number decreased to 116 cases and as of the printing of this newsletter, the number of cases over seven years old dropped to 44.

The Commission will also increase its testing efforts, uncovering systemic discrimination in all areas covered by the Human Rights Law. We recently joined with Princeton University in a study examining widespread employment discrimination that the previously incarcerated face, as well as locating employers who have exemplary records in hiring the previously incarcerated.

The Community Relations Bureau will continue to work with immigrant communities, both employers and employees. In addition, the Bureau will expand its peer mediation-training program in selected high schools throughout the City providing students with the tools to resolve conflicts in the schools before they escalate. The Commission will also expand its Equal Access program to ensure accessibility to the disabled and elderly.

Patricia L. Gatling

Patricia L. Gatling Commissioner/Chair

THE LAW

THE NEW YORK CITY HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS IN THE NATION.

THE LAW PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS BASED ON RACE, COLOR, CREED, AGE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ALIENAGE OR CITIZENSHIP STATUS, GENDER (INCLUDING GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT), SEXUAL ORIENTATION, DISABILITY, OR MARITAL STATUS. IN ADDITION, THE LAW AFFORDS PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT BASED ON ARREST OR CONVICTION RECORD AND STATUS AS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, STALKING AND SEX OFFENSES. IN HOUSING, THE LAW AFFORDS ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS BASED ON LAWFUL OCCUPATION AND FAMILY STATUS. THE CITY HUMAN RIGHTS LAW ALSO PROHIBITS RETALIATION AND BIAS-RELATED HARASSMENT.

Grants Honors

DOJ GRANT:

The US Department of Justice renewed its \$70,800 grant to the Commission for its Immigrant Employment Rights Project. The multi-lingual program, now in its second year, continues to successfully reach

the City's diverse immigrant communities, informing them about the protections against employment discrimination they have under Federal and City law.

CHRISTOPHER REEVE PARALYSIS FOUNDATION
CCHR is one of 55 groups nationwide to receive a grant from the

Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation. The \$24,501 grant will enhance the existing services of the Commission's Project Equal Access. The program assists individuals with disabilities under the Human Rights Law.

STAFF MEMBER NAMED TO BOARD

Project Equal Access Director Ted Finkelstein was recently named to the Community Advisory Committee of the Spinal Cord Injury Model System of the Mt. Sinai Department of Rehabilitation Medicine.

IMPACT GRANT

With a \$51,370 grant from JP Morgan Chase, CCHR is expanding its Peer Mediation Program. The program trains City high school students to mediate problems that arise among fellow students in their school.

TRAINING INSTITUTE

CCHR's Training Institute continues the Commission's vigorous educational efforts by providing training in all areas of the Human Rights Law. Recently, Woodhull Hospital contracted CCHR to train their food preparers and nutritionists in the Law.

Muslim Unity Forum

In December 2003, the Commission sponsored a Muslim Unity Forum. The Forum served to familiarize the diverse Bronx Muslim community with essential City services available to them as well as providing an overview of the City Human Rights Law.

The Forum was organized in response to the anti-discrimination survey conducted by the Commission (See pg.4). CCHR teamed with members of the Islamic Falah of America and the Islamic Cultural Center in the Bronx, home to some 30 mosques whose worshippers speak many languages.

"The Muslim community must be aware of the City services available to them and have the confidence to avail themselves of those services," said Commissioner Gatling. "The Forum is part of the Commission's efforts to work with the Muslim clergy and community leaders to build bridges and develop community alliances. A first step is for people to know their neighbors and to take advantage of their rights."

The Forum focused on topics such as health care, public safety, education and social services and the right to work without regard to religion or national origin. The Commission is planning similar forums in the other boroughs.



CCHR Commissioner Omar Mohammedi speaks at the event.



Muslim Unity Forum organizer Hassan Ceesay (left) and Imam Baba Jagana present CCHR Bronx office deputy director Paula Sanders with flowers following the event.

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Commissioner Patricia L. Gatling testified before the Equal Employment Practices Commission on November 19, 2003. Her testimony focused on employment discrimination in City agencies during Fiscal Year 2003.

Deputy Commissioner Cliff Mulqueen testified before the City Council on October 16, 2003 regarding four pieces of legislation that would amend the City Human Rights Law.

3-1-1 CITIZEN SERVICE CENTER

The 3-1-1 Citizen Service Center provides easy access to all non-emergency City services. Dial 3-1-1.

COMMISSION IN NEWS

亞裔受歧視 多不投訴

本報記者林意善紐約報導

紐約市民權局指出，雖然該局相信市內華裔面對各種歧視的問題相當嚴重，但卻有許多受害者因種種原因而沒有向該局投訴，這些受害者及擔心投訴後

Sing Tao 8/08/03 Page 1

Arabs felt targeted after 9/11

By MICHAEL SAUL and MAGGIE HABERMAN
DAILY NEWS CITY HALL BUREAU

The quality of life for hundreds of the city's Muslims and Arabs changed after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack. Many reported incidents of discrimination and harassment.

Daily News 10/20/03 Metro Page

Muslims get aid in bias fight

By SONDR A WOLFER
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Muslims in the Bronx got instructions on how to look for bias in the city. The Commission on Human Rights last month sponsored by the city's Commission on Human Rights.

Daily News 12/05/03 Page 9

GOVERNMENT ALERT

CRACKING DOWN ON DISCRIMINATION

The city Commission on Human Rights is launching a campaign to uncover discrimination in residential neighborhoods with heavy concentrations of a single ethnicity. The investigations are headed by retired New York City police officers hired by Commissioner Patricia Gatling.

Crain's New York Business 7/21/03 Page 34

Metro Briefing

NEW YORK

MANHATTAN: WIDESPREAD BIAS REPORTED AFTER 9/11
More than two-thirds of Muslims, Arabs and South Asians responding to a New York City survey say they experienced discrimination in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attack. The city's Commission on Human Rights distributed 11,800 written surveys in six different

New York Times 10/17/03 Metro Section



NY1 For You: Cart Corrals Present Obstacles For The Disabled

DIAL UP BROAD BAND

SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2003

NY 1 9/18/03

In her latest "NY1 For You," NY1's Susan Jhun reports on a how some disabilities advocates are trying to ban cart corrals at local shopping centers.

Ignorancia de leyes Inmigración genera casos discriminación

El Diario 8/08/03 Page 5

Discrimination Report Released

Commissioner Patricia L. Gatling recently released a report that revealed Muslims, Arabs and South Asians in New York City believe discrimination against them intensified after 9/11, although the incidents went largely unreported. The report, based upon a survey conducted in several languages, documented perceived incidents of discrimination in the areas covered by the City's Human Rights Law.

Commissioner Gatling expressed the commitment Mayor Bloomberg and the Commission have in fighting prejudice and discrimination against the City's diverse communities. Because of fear and reluctance to come forward to report incidents, the Commission did not notice an increase in discrimination against these communities.

The survey has already helped to strengthen the Commission's connections with Muslim, Arab and South Asian Communities in New York City. It will also serve to shape future education, prevention and enforcement efforts.

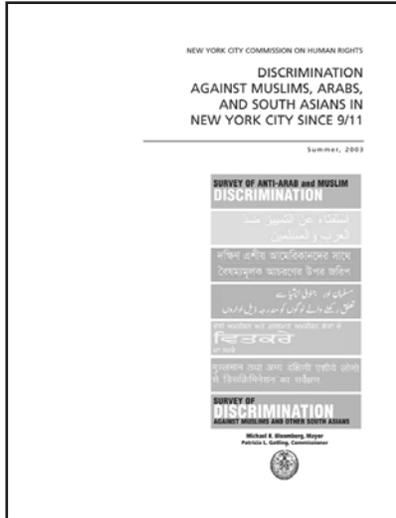
From over 11,000 surveys distributed throughout the City between October 2002 and April 2003, the Commission received 956 completed surveys. These responses documented 1,226 incidents of discrimination reported by 659 individuals. It was revealed that 69% of the respondents believed that they were the

victim of one or more incidents of discrimination or bias-related harassment. Further, 79% of respondents felt that they had been negatively affected by the events of 9/11, regardless of whether they have directly experienced discrimination.

The report also revealed that 83% of respondents did not ask for help from anyone in a government agency or community organization because they were either afraid, believed that nothing would be done, did not know who to contact or thought the incident did not warrant reporting.

Bias-related harassment was the most common type of discrimination and comprised 37% of the incidents reported in the survey. Employment discrimination followed at 26% and public accommodations at 25%. Housing discrimination made up the remaining 11%.

The Commission's survey and report were funded in part by the New York Community Trust. Those assisting the Commission were: the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, The Arab-American Family Support Center, Chhaya Community Development Corporation, The Council of Pakistan Organization, South Asian Youth Action!, South Asian Council for Social Services, and The Coney Island Avenue Project.



THE NEW YORK CITY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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Bronx, NY 10457

Queens

136-56 39th Avenue, Room 305
Flushing, NY 11345

Staten Island

60 Bay Street
Staten Island, NY 10301

New Managing Attorney Named

CCHR recently named Lanny Alexander to the position of Managing Attorney. She replaces former Managing Attorney Jennifer Siegel-McNamara.

Ms. Alexander brings a wealth of experience to the Commission, including 10 years as an attorney in the NYC Housing Authority Law Department's General Litigation Division. There she specialized in employment and housing discrimination, defamation, First Amendment, and workers compensation law.

Ms. Alexander has appeared before all of the local administrative human rights agencies and has extensive litigation experience in Federal Court and the Second Circuit of Appeals.

Prior to the Housing Authority, Ms. Alexander was in private practice where she was an associate at Carpenter, Bennett and Morrissey (NJ) and Skadden Arps Slate Meaghen and Flom.

Her experiences enabled her to develop strong investigative skills that will serve the

Commission well.

At CCHR, Ms. Alexander supervises the Law Enforcement Bureau and is responsible for assigning cases to staff attorneys and Human Rights Specialists, overseeing investigations, docketing and reviewing all documents issued by the Bureau, as well as other administrative legal work. Additionally, Ms. Alexander heads one of several CCHR teams that handle the investigation and prosecution of complaints.

Ms. Alexander received her JD from Pace University Law School and BA from



Marymount College. A native of Westchester, Ms. Alexander currently resides in Manhattan.

CCHR Managing Attorney Lanny Alexander.