"Our greatest strength lies in you, the people who live here.
We are driven by compassion, have a moral compass that guides us and a resolve to leave our communities better than we found them."

Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman
2018 State of the County Speech

Office of Human Rights Annual Report - 2017

Department of County Administration, Lonnie R. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer

Table of Contents

Letter from County Executive Allan H. Kittleman 2

Letter from Reverend Dr. Barbara J. Sands, Office of Human Rights Administrator 3

Office of Human Rights 4

Caseload Analysis..... 6

Hate-Bias Incidents 10

Outreach Activities & Professional Development 11

Letter from Reverend Robert Turner, Human Rights Commission Chair 16

Human Rights Commission 17

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission 20

Letter from County Executive

Dear Friends*:*

This 2017 Annual Report for the Office of Human Rights and the Human Rights Commission is an important measure of the status of civil rights in our county, as well as a celebration of the progress being made to safeguard diversity, inclusion and tolerance in our community.

Unfortunately, we continue to experience challenges that demonstrate how important it is to remain dedicated and focused on creating a better Howard County. As residents of this diverse county, I encourage all of us to remember that we are in this together and must work hard to promote living our lives in the spirit of acceptance, tolerance and civility. Our #OneHoward initiative has reached more than 3,500 people and students in our community in our effort to promote the values of diversity and inclusiveness through respectful conversation and educational events.

My father was a civil rights leader and I grew up surrounded by many others in the movement who fought so hard against injustice. I will continue to push for us to adhere to these values.

I thank Reverend Dr. Barbara Sands for her ongoing efforts to lead an office that serves everyone's interests, focusing on efficient case resolution and expanded outreach. I hope Howard County continues to demonstrate that it is a place where everyone is valued.

Sincerely,

Allan H. Kittleman
Howard County Executive

Letter from Office of Human Rights Administrator

Dear Howard County Citizens,

The 2017 Annual Report of the Office of Human Rights (OHR) and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) provides us an opportunity to measure our accomplishments and strategies for future challenges. OHR seeks to dutifully perform the responsibilities of investigating and resolving discrimination complaints in the areas of Employment, Housing, Law Enforcement, Financing and Public Accommodation. This year, OHR received 94 discrimination complaints, issued 51 findings, mediated 11 cases and negotiated $170,251.50 in case settlements. OHR is impartial, and does this work with integrity and fairness for the complainant and the respondent.

OHR participates in numerous out-reach activities and partners with many community organizations through diversity forums, summits, interactive workshops and training to equip participants with the necessary skills to promote unity, peace, justice, equality and inclusion for all citizens. Such partnerships include the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Commission, Howard County Public School System, Coalition Apposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE), Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA), Office of Housing and Community Development, Human Trafficking Commission, Hate-Crime Unit, Department of Justice (DOJ), LGBT Community, A Safe Place, Human Trafficking Victim Awareness Group, Gender Sensitivity Group, Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Group, Teen Leadership Group, Conexiones of Howard County, and Anti-Drug Enforcement Unit; collaborating together as one voice for the purpose of evoking change. OHR and HRC participate in supplying Freedom Packs for survival victims of Human Trafficking.

I thank the OHR staff who serve the citizens of Howard County with steadfast dedication, and professionalism in their daily duties. OHR gives thanks and appreciation to the interns and volunteers for their faithfulness and eagerness to promote inclusiveness while recognizing the diversity in Howard County.

OHR strives to enhance our performance to become better at the work of anti-discrimination. We recognize that everyone has gifts and talents and worth. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect, to expect justice and to have an equal opportunity to live a life of inclusion and peace. OHR's efforts are for the common good of the citizens of Howard County.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Barbara J. Sands,
Administrator

Office of Human Rights

Staff

Administrator

Reverend Dr. Barbara J. Sands

Investigative Staff

Mary M. Campbell, Senior Investigator and Compliance Officer
Cheryl Brower, Investigator
Todd Givens, Investigator
Raemond Parrott, Intake Investigator

Outreach Staff

Stephanie Chapple, Community Outreach Coordinator
Farheen Sheik, Community Outreach Coordinator

Administrative Staff

Evelyn Boulware, Administrative Aide
Kathy Darity, Administrative Support Technician (Retired)
Chaunta Taylor, Administrative Support Technician

Mission Statement

The Howard County Office of Human Rights (OHR) was established in 1975 by the County Executive and County Council and functions pursuant to the Howard County Code, Section 12.200-12.218. The responsibilities of OHR are to investigate complaints of discrimination; resolve complaints by conference, conciliation or litigation; and enforce the Howard County Human Rights Law. In addition, the Office serves as a catalyst in fostering attitudes and beliefs among Howard County citizens to ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity to pursue lives free of discrimination.

Complaint Process

If you believe that you have experienced discrimination in Howard County, you may file a complaint with the Office of Human Rights (OHR) by contacting our office. OHR has jurisdiction in five areas of the law which include: employment, housing, public accommodation, financing and law enforcement.

To begin the process, the complainant must complete a pre-complaint questionnaire which asks for information about the alleged discriminatory incident(s). The intake investigator, along with the complainant, will draft a charge of discrimination. Once the charge is signed, the case is then assigned to an investigator for investigation.

For housing cases, complaints must be filed within one year of the alleged discrimination. For all other cases, complaints must be filed within six months of the alleged discrimination.

Complaint Summary 2017

For the calendar year 2017, OHR investigated and issued 51 findings, closed 96 cases and took in 94 new cases. Investigators responded to an additional 202 inquiries which did not become cases. OHR participated in community programs, as well as cooperated with public agencies and private groups on educational programs, outreach activities and training.

Office of Human Rights—a Fair Employment Practice Agency

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is authorized by statute to use the services of state and local Fair Employment Practice Agencies (FEPA), like the Howard County Office of Human Rights (OHR), to assist in meeting its mandate to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA).

OHR has been a FEPA designee since 1984. This is quite an honor for OHR and a confirmation of the quality of its investigative abilities. Additionally, EEOC has named OHR as a “certified acceptance” agency. This means that OHR has consistently met the contractual requirements to EEOC’s satisfaction, and that EEOC accepts OHR’s case decisions.

Pursuant to Congressional mandate and in an effort to establish an integrated system for more expeditious resolution of employment discrimination charges, the EEOC has committed itself to continued development and enhancement of such a system in partnership with FEPAs, such as OHR.

2017 Total Caseload Analysis

The following tables provide a statistical report of the complaints and monetary settlements for the year 2017:

Table 1 - Total Cases Filed with OHR 2015-2017
Table 2 - Caseload Analysis by Basis 2017
Table 3 - Monetary Awards Gained through OHR Intervention 2017
Table 4 - Monetary Settlements 2015-2017
Table 5 - Cases Closed 2016-2017

Table 1 - Total Cases Filed with OHR 2015-2017

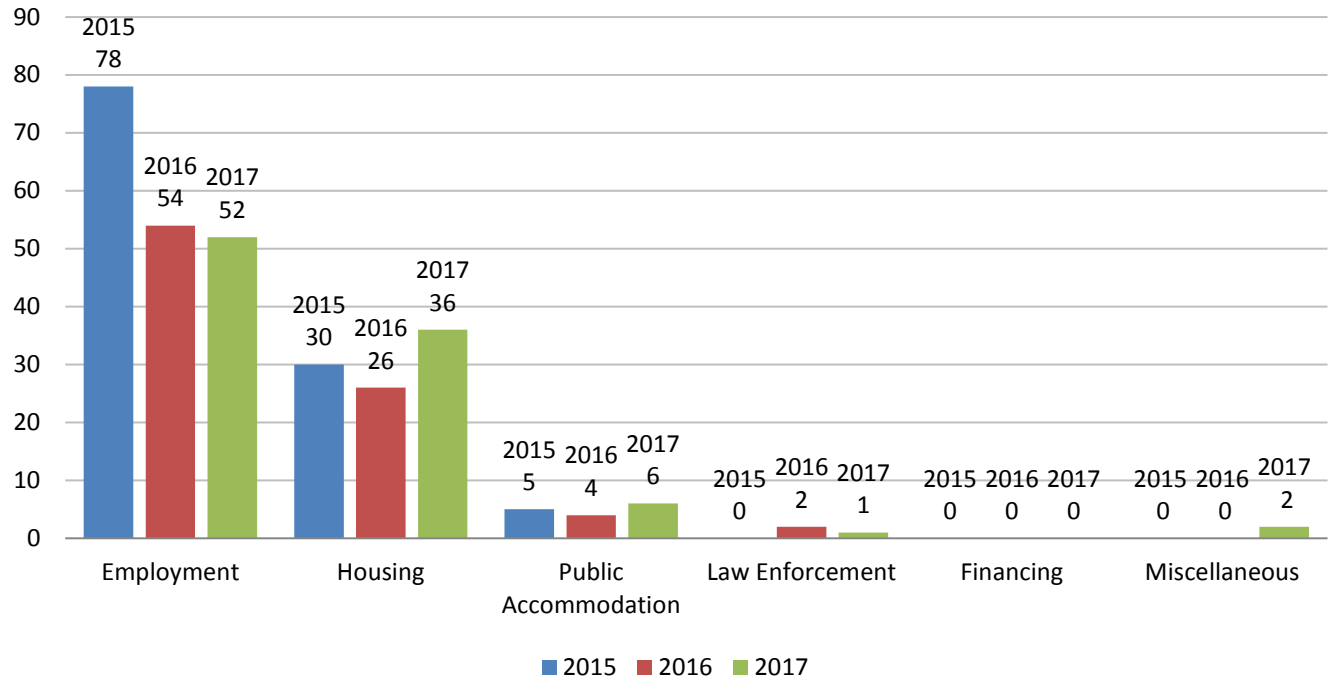
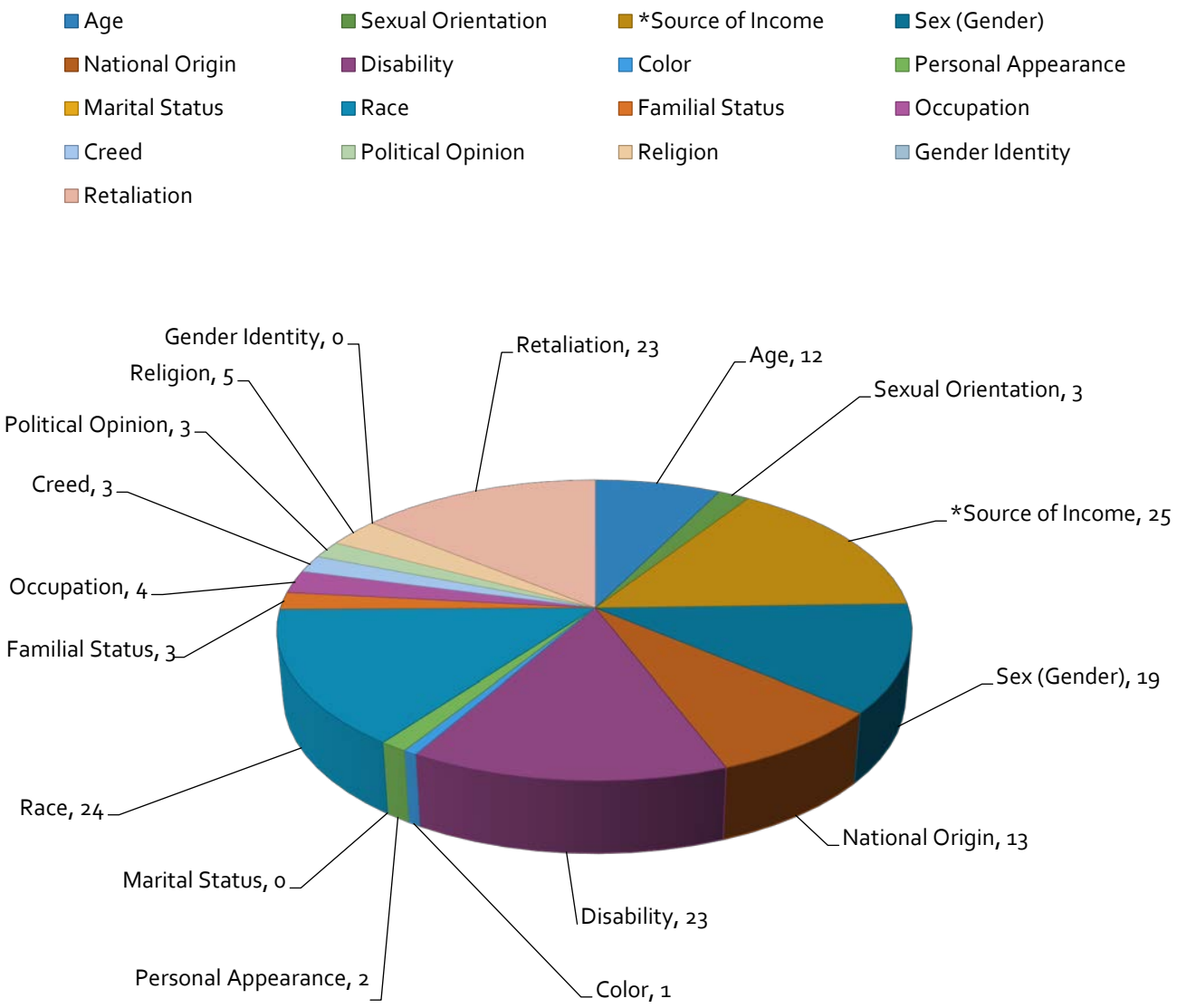
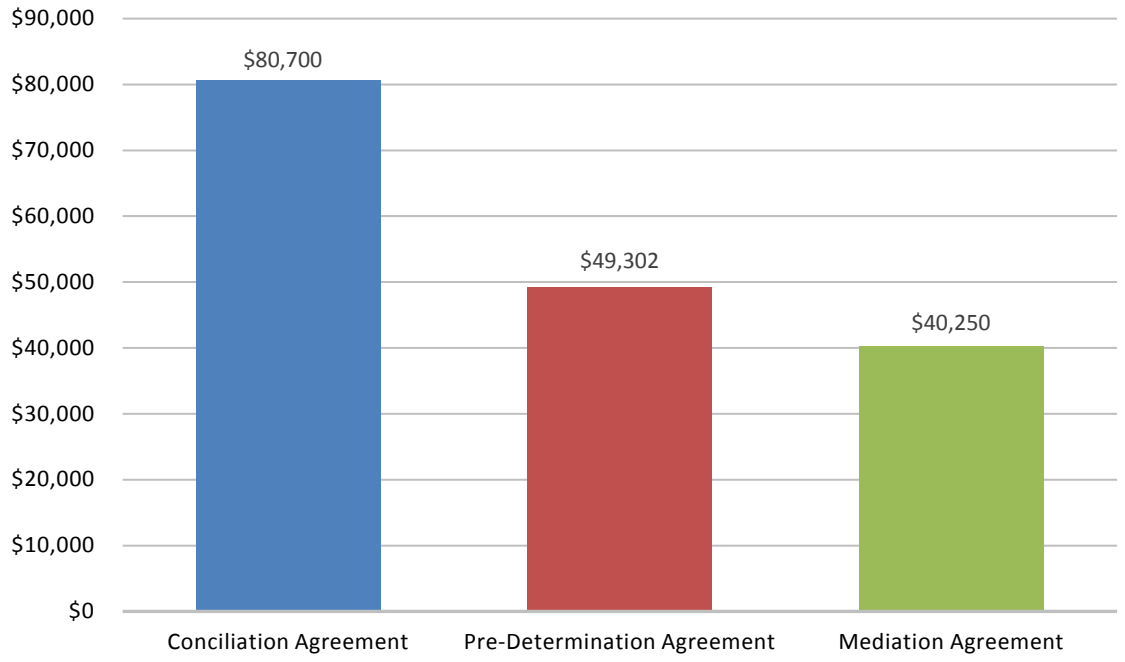


Table 2 - Caseload Analysis by Basis 2017



Note: *Source of Income is for Housing cases only

Table 3 - Monetary Awards Gained through OHR Intervention 2017



Note: Non-Monetary Settlements and Awards 2017

In addition to the monetary awards, OHR settled a number of cases which included non-monetary settlement terms. For example, five cases had persons with vouchers renew or enter into new leases. Reasonable accommodations were provided for a number of complainants including: working from home, new supervisor, a chair at the workstation, and health benefits provided. Other non-monetary awards were a dress code accommodation, neutral reference, discharge changed to resignation, training in policy, apartment renovated, picture removed from company materials, and open discussion of policies to clarify expectations.

Table 4 - Monetary Settlements 2015-2017

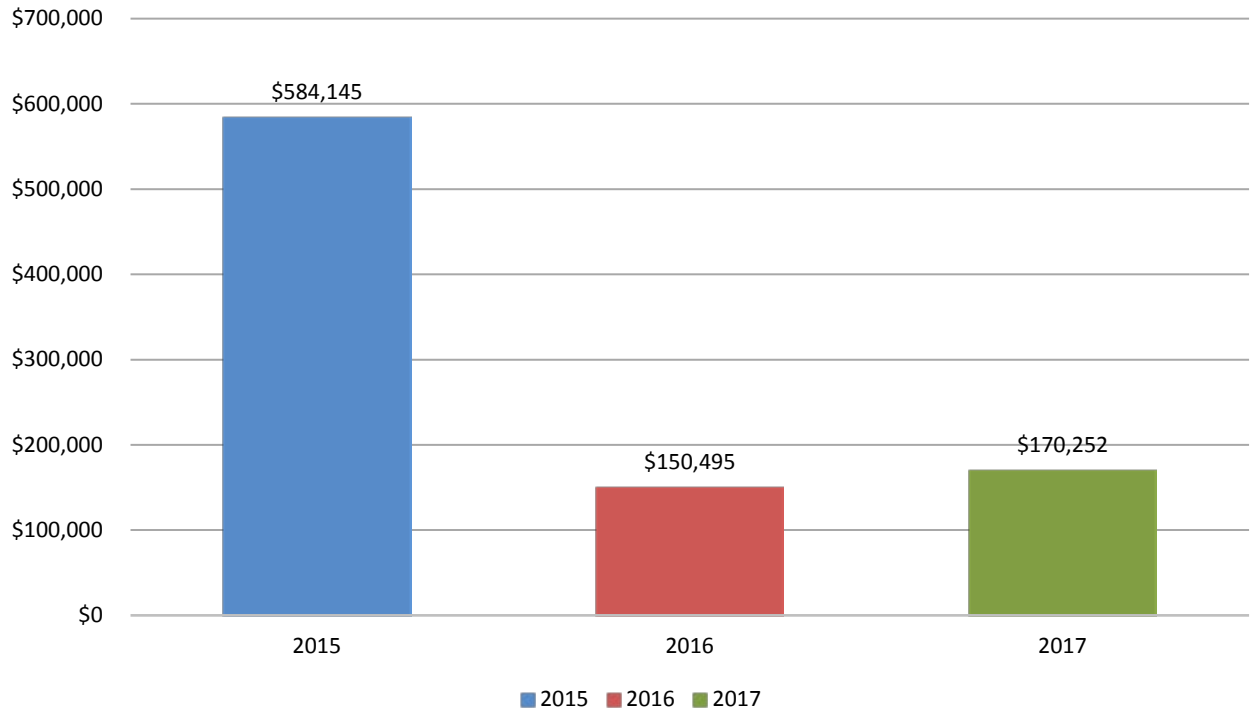
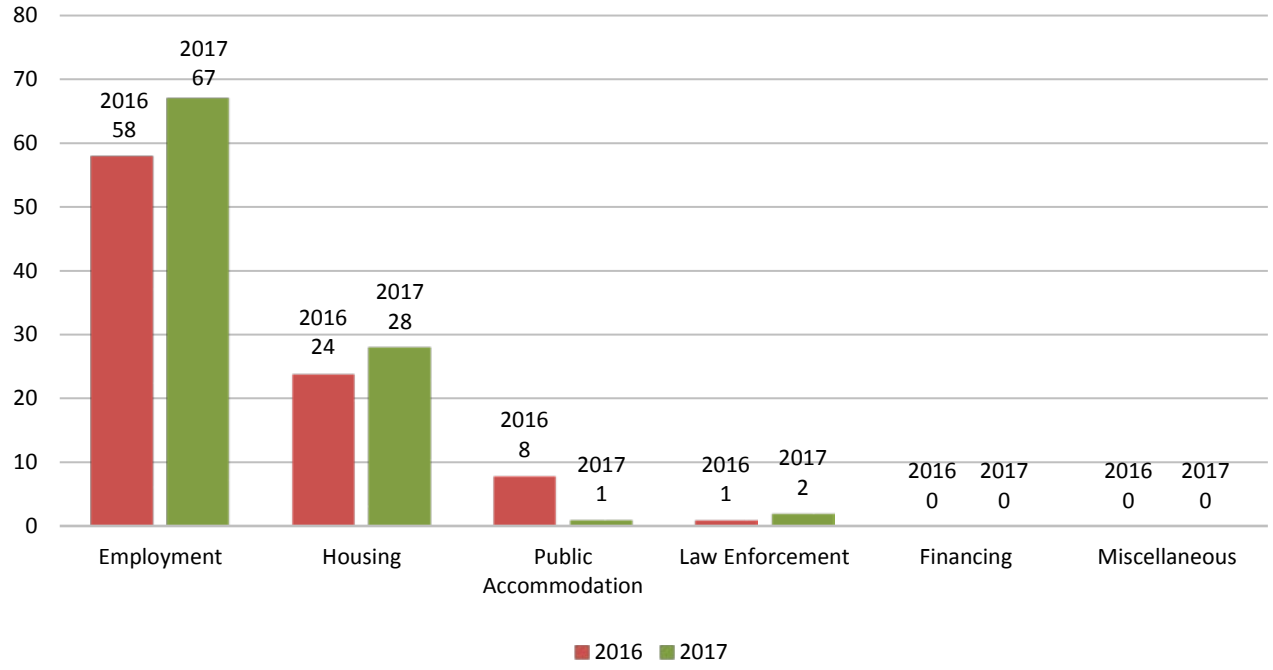


Table 5 - Cases Closed 2016-2017



Hate-Bias Incidents 2017

A hate-bias incident (HBI) is an act of prejudice, hate or violence directed against individuals, groups or institutions because of race, religion, ethnic background or sexual orientation. HBIs are intended to cause harm and may result in physical injury, emotional injury or property damage.

Hate-bias incidents pose a unique danger to society. Such acts affect the fundamental rights of the entire community, not just the immediate victim. These incidents cause tension and may erupt into violence among or between different groups.

Certain types of incidents are crimes and, as with all crimes, the police should be notified. If you think an incident has occurred, call and report it to the Howard County police immediately. You may also call the Office of Human Rights (OHR). It is not necessary for the reporter of an HBI to know whether the act is a crime. The police will determine which laws are involved.

When HBIs are reported, OHR helps to provide assistance to the victim and the community, apprehend those responsible, promote community harmony, and alert local government.

OHR is working closely with the Howard County Police Department to review reports of hate-bias incidents and ensure accurate reporting. The OHR was established in 1975 by the County Executive and County Council and functions pursuant to the Howard County Code, Section 12.200-12.218.

Incidents by Month 2017													
	JAN	**FEB**	**MAR**	**APR**	**MAY**	**JUN**	**JUL**	**AUG**	**SEP**	**OCT**	**NOV**	**DEC**	**Total**
Jewish			1	1	1		1						4
Black	1		2	1	2	2	2	2	1	3		2	17
LGBT			1	1	1	2		1			1		7
White			1								1		2
Middle East			1					1					2
Latino													0
Asian									1				1
Undetermined	1					2	1	2		1			7
													40

Outreach Activities & Professional Development

Human Trafficking

How to Combat Human Trafficking – Human Trafficking 101 Classes: (12 lectures) Monthly, every 4th Saturday 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Glenwood Branch Library, Cooksville, MD, North Laurel Community Center and local churches. April 2016-March 2017.

Lectures included:

- Orientation/Human Trafficking for Beginner: Who, What, When, Where, and How?
- In Plain Sight: Labor & Sex Trafficking in our Neighborhoods
- Saving Our Children: How traffickers prey on our youth – Signs and Prevention
- Disenfranchised Teens
- The 'Players'
- Human Trafficking: The Past and the Future
- Runaways: How their vulnerable situation could be exploited by the traffickers
- Labor Trafficking: Forced Labor, Debt Bondage, Involuntary Child Labor
- No Holidays for Slaves
- The Demand
- The Housing
- Trafficking in Persons

Human Rights Day in Annapolis

The Maryland Association of Human Relations/Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) and The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE) sponsored Human Rights Day on March 2, 2017 at the Lowe House Office Building in Annapolis MD. The theme was Human Rights/Civil Rights/The Path Forward and featured advocacy updates, Legislator check-ins, panel discussions and speakers.

OHR staff were involved in planning and implementing this occasion.

Hate Crimes Update/Seminar

The Maryland Law Enforcement 2017 Hate Crimes Update/Seminar on May 25, 2017 in Laurel MD was sponsored by The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism (COVE) which is an alliance of public and private civil rights organizations, community human relations, law enforcement, advocacy, religious and educational organizations in the Maryland area.

Mary M. Campbell, OHR's Compliance Officer serves as co-chair. COVE's goal is to foster peaceful coexistence among diverse groups in the community by providing leadership and training opportunities and developing effective responses to hate crimes and violence. This conference was co-sponsored by OHR, the Department of Justice (DOJ), U.S. Attorney's Office, MD Office of the Attorney General, and the MD Commission on Civil Rights. Presenters addressed topics including the State of hate across the country, updated FBI-UCR reporting requirements, MD reporting requirements and law enforcement best practices in responding to hate crimes.

Human Trafficking Awareness

University of Maryland – Francis King Carey School of Law, Baltimore, Maryland – May 2017

Howard County Police Department presented information on Human Trafficking Awareness in Howard County to the Millionaires Club of Howard County, Ten Oaks Ballroom, Clarksville, MD – June 2017

Case Investigation Procedures

Briefing of Human Rights' Commission (HRC) on OHR case investigation procedures, June 15, 2017.

Mary M. Campbell, Compliance Officer, provided HRC Members with information of the case handling and procedures for investigation at the June meeting of the HRC.

Investigator Training

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Investigator Training – Washington D.C. – October 23 -27, 2017. Attended by Todd Givens, OHR Investigator, this 32-hour classroom/interactive course was taught by a current EEOC Investigator and a former Administrative Law Judge. The trainers provided interactive exercises about interviewing witnesses and completing investigative reports, as well as reviewing the basics of EEO law and theories of discrimination. Some of the topics covered included:

- Basics of EEO law and theories of discrimination
- Models of proof in employment discrimination cases
- Elements of a disability discrimination case
- Tools and techniques for planning and conducting interviews
- Drafting an investigation report
- Elements of a harassment case

Fair Employment Practices

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) 2017 Annual Fair Employment Practices (FEPA) Mini-conference, November 14 -15, 2017 – Cape May, NJ.

Update Training for Staff

Mandated training for Office of Human Rights' (OHR) investigative staff and attorney to update staff on emerging areas of the law, address contract principals and ways to improve the working relationship between the EEOC and OHR. Subjects included discussions by experts on proving systemic discrimination, "Big Data," legal aspects of medical marijuana, FEPA achievements and priority charge handling.

Mediation Certification

The Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution – Certificate Program in ADR – College Park, MD – December 4 – 8, 2017.

Attended by Investigator Rae Parrott who received a certificate for 40 hours of training as a mediator. His certification as a mediator joins the other investigators in OHR who are also certified mediators. Having certified mediators on staff in OHR allows OHR to provide mediation for parties to cases under investigation, instead of

hiring outside mediators, thus saving money for the County. This is a free service of OHR for parties to cases in OHR. The ADR Training Program provides participants with an array of highly transferable dispute resolution skills.

Fair Housing

OHR continues to work closely with the Regional Fair Housing Group throughout the year as the region makes advances in civil rights in housing. This group provides both outreach and training on fair housing in the region, publication of fair housing brochures in English, Spanish and Korean for use in Howard, Baltimore, Harford and Anne Arundel Counties, as well as Baltimore City. On December 6, 2017, a fair housing training for officials in local governments was held in conjunction with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. Planning continues for the Regional Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Plan.

Housing Commission Voucher Holders

Throughout the year, OHR investigators brief Voucher Holders at the Howard County Housing Commission on their rights and responsibilities under the Howard County Fair Housing Law as they search for new homes using their portable housing vouchers. In particular, the investigators explain rights and responsibilities under the Source of Income portion of the law, as well as providing information about how to get help for landlord/tenant issues.

Fair Housing Act

Regional Fair Housing Group (OHR is a member) provided a briefing on December 6, 2017 for local County jurisdictions on the Fair Housing Act and how to limit exposure to fair housing enforcement actions. Experts in the field talked about two lesser known obligations under the Fair Housing Act. Local governments may face enforcement when neutral policies have a disparate impact on a protected class. Local governments that receive federal and community development funds must “affirmatively further fair housing.”

Interfaith Program

OHR participated in an interfaith program held on December 7, 2017, by the American Turkish Friendship Association (ATFA) and the RUMI Forum of Maryland titled “Abraham’s Tent - Giving, Sharing & Caring.” A Jewish Rabbi, Muslim Imam and Christian scholar discussed the tradition of healing the world, charity, and good works. This initiative aims to provide space for persons of different religious and cultural traditions to get to know one another and build community through casual conversations and thoughtful presentations.

Hate-Bias Crimes

COVE and OHR hosted the MD State Police Superintendent, William Pallozzi, for a discussion on Hate-Bias Crimes and Incidents throughout the State of Maryland on December 12, 2017. As the MD State Police are responsible for collecting information from each police and/or sheriff’s office in MD and reporting them annually, there has been a pattern over time of some jurisdictions not reporting any incidents. Superintendent Pallozzi will be working with MD Commission on Civil Rights and COVE to begin to ameliorate the problem.

Outreach/Training Activities by Office of Human Rights Administrator

1. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade – February 2017.
2. Legislative Day in Annapolis – Visitation of legislators to talk about issues of concern in Maryland, passing bill on anti-human trafficking and massage parlors and making changes in laws which affect Marylanders – February 2017.
3. United Nations Headquarters African Diaspora Heritage, New York, New York – Forced tribal journey through Africa to America and the effects on African-Americans of today – March 2017.
4. Village Board of Directors planning for Sister to Sister program of Howard County – Owen Brown, Columbia, MD – April 2017.
5. University of Maryland – Francis King Carey School of Law, Baltimore Maryland - Seminar by Judge Bell and University of Maryland Law professors regarding black lawyers' contributions to America and honoring the history of black lawyers and judges - May 2017.
6. NAACP's Platinum Freedom Fund Jazz Breakfast and Awards Celebration (Howard County Branch) – Martins West, Baltimore, MD – Celebrating 70 years, with the theme of "The Commitment Continues" – May 2017.
7. Howard County Police Department promotes human trafficking awareness to the Millionaires Club of Howard County, Ten Oaks Ball Room, Columbia, MD – June 2017.
8. Iftar Dinner, Owen Brown Community Center, Columbia, MD – Iftar is a ritual observed by Muslims during Ramadan, one of their holy festivals. During the month of Ramadan, Muslims observe a daily fast during the daytime. They have a pre-dawn meal and fast throughout the day. They break their daily fast with a special meal in the evening, which is known as Iftar. – June 2017.
9. Race & Unity Task Force of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha of Howard County – In collaboration with Howard Community College, OHR participated in the colloquium entitled, The Arc of Justice: Past, Present and Future. The event featured a panel discussion addressing issues related to race and diversity, followed by facilitated breakout sessions. – June 2017.
10. African American Cultural Center, Historic Oakland Manor – Local history of Howard County Blacks – June 2017.
11. HCPSS Student Leadership Forum and Multi-Cultural Diversity Production – "Student, Family and Opioids," How all are affected – July 2017.
12. Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Summer Conference, Ocean City, MD – This conference is about job growth and the changes we've experienced in Maryland's economy. Participants learned about the industries impacting Maryland's economy, how counties can attract and keep businesses, and how local government employers can hire and retain the best public servants to benefit the people of Maryland – August 2017.
13. Center on Social Justice – Silver Spring, MD – Working for new legislation to assist victims of human trafficking and incarcerated people to have restored rights – August 2017.

14. International Association of Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) Conference – Seattle WA – The conference is a gathering of the best Civil and Human Rights professionals in the U.S. and Canada to exchange ideas, hear fresh perspectives and develop solutions to the human rights issues of today. The theme for this year's conference was "Entering A New Era: Uniting to Protect and Promote Human Rights for All" – September 2017.
15. Chinese of Howard County Gathering – Celebration of Chinese heritage and cultural values – September 2017.
16. Harriet Tubman Foundation Juneteenth Celebration – Columbia, MD – Juneteenth, also known as Juneteenth Independence Day or Freedom Day, is an American holiday that commemorates the June 19, 1865 announcement of the abolition of slavery in the State of Texas, and more generally, the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans throughout the former Confederacy of the southern United States. Juneteenth is recognized as a state holiday or special day of observance in forty-five states – September 2017.
17. Black Pioneers of Howard County (1800-1965) – George Howard Building – A step back in history to celebrate and honor those who forged a path. Though rough at times, they made life wonderful growing up in Howard County's black neighborhoods. Those who attended could reminisce through photographs and enjoy the entertainment and refreshments as we celebrated our kindred spirits – November 2017.
18. Howard County Police Department Community Outreach Division Security/Safety – Howard Community College – Showing safety measures to local houses of worship. What to do if…? All being alert to their surroundings – December 2017.
19. Howard County Police Department Safety & Security Houses of Worship – West Liberty United Methodist Church – December 2017.
20. Islamic Women Meet, Dar-al-TAQWA (Pakistani, Indian, African, Indonesian, Bangladesh) – Clarksville, MD – Invited leaders of other ethnicities to share experiences and to have SMALL talks about area "SAMENESS".
21. Non-Profit Organizations – Bi-Monthly meeting on issues of provisions for marginalized people (Homeless, Victims of Domestic Abuse-Violence) – Columbia, MD.
22. Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) – monthly regional meetings.

Letter from Human Rights Commission Chair

January 4, 2018

Dear Howard County Residents,

It has been an honor to serve the citizens of this diverse county that we call home. As I reflect upon 2017, I am proud of the numerous accomplishments and initiatives this dedicated body of volunteers has accomplished throughout the year. I thank the members for your commitment and hard work in all that you do to build bridges by embracing diversity, tolerance and unity. It's been a joy working with you, as well as the Office of Human Rights staff, and the Administrator for the Office of Human Rights Dr. Barbara J. Sands.

Last year, the Commission met monthly to discuss complaints, resolved more than 15 cases, and attended numerous community programs and events that make our county one of the best places to live, learn, and work. Additionally, we participated in a county-wide study tasked by the Howard County Council, and continuously attended workshops and trainings to work diligently toward promoting human rights for all citizens.

This year, in addition to our regular duties and responsibilities, the Commission will continue efforts to enhance our community education and engagement. We want all residents and employees of Howard County to know that the Commission is committed to affirming, promoting and protecting the human rights for all citizens and employees of our County. We want each of you to know where you can find general information about human rights, discrimination, and how your concerns can be heard.

In 2018, we look forward to addressing new challenges and embracing new opportunities to continue making Howard County a wonderful place for you and your family.

Humbly submitted,

Rev. Dr. Robert Turner
Human Rights Commission, Chair

Human Rights Commission

REVEREND ROBERT TURNER, CHAIR
Term expires: 3/1/19

MOHAMMED SHIRAZ AHMED, VICE CHAIR
Term expires: 3/1/20

SHIVANIA K. AGHERA
Term expires: 3/1/22

CHUEN-CHIN BIANCA CHANG
Term expires: 3/1/20

BOB FORD
Term expires: 3/1/18

HECTOR GARCIA
Term expires: 3/1/22

JOAN HASH
Term expires: 6/1/21

PETER HWANG
Term expires: 6/1/21

OPEL T. JONES, I
Term expires: 3/1/19

ILENE KESSLER
Term expires: 3/1/18

SCOTT MARKOW
Term expires: 3/1/18

KUI ZHAO
Term expires: 3/1/20

MISBAH FAROOQI
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 6/30/17

SHARON JEON,
Student Commissioner
Term expires: 6/30/18

2017 Human Rights Commission Award Recipients

The Howard County Human Rights Commission is pleased to announce that Young-chan Han and Denene Yates have been selected as recipients of the 2017 Howard County Human Rights Award.

As an International Student and Family Outreach Specialist with the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) from 1999-2007, Ms. Han led more than twenty school-based bilingual community liaisons to bridge communication and cultural gaps between schools and immigrant families. Her efforts supported equal access to programs and services for all families in Howard County, including Hispanic, Korean, Arabic, and Haitian communities, just to name a few.

As former president of FIRN's Board of Directors in 2010, Ms. Han's role expanded to assisting all foreign-born residents in Howard County access community resources. The ground-breaking International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP) in 2006, created by Ms. Han, continues as a best practice in developing parent leadership skills in Howard County schools as well as in other counties and states. Some of Ms. Han's written work*, From Survivors to Leaders: Stages of immigrant parent involvement in schools*, was included in the book, *Innovative Voices in Education: Engaging Diverse Communities*. Ms. Han's efforts have diversified leadership, and enhanced community resilience in Howard County.

The 2017 Human Rights Commission Award committee recognizes the time, effort and commitment that Young-chan Han has devoted to supporting families and Howard County citizens for nearly two decades, and above all, her role in advancing and protecting human rights in our county.

As a Human Trafficking Specialist and Victims' Advocate, Denene Yates was selected as this year's award recipient for her voluntary work in combating human trafficking. She serves as an advocate for those who have no voice, and testifies on legislative priorities on both the local and state levels. Ms. Yates also works with non-profit organizations to provide personal care and counseling for victims, while working closely with law enforcement and the Howard County Office of Human Rights to assist in victims' recovery. She has conducted numerous training classes, educational seminars, and increased public awareness throughout Maryland. Some of her training classes include: The New Form of Slavery, Who are the Victims of Human Trafficking, What are Some of the Signs of Human Trafficking and Human Trafficking 101 & 102. Ms. Yates and her family have opened their homes to victims, occasionally for weeks at a time. When called upon at all hours of the night, Ms. Yates is there to assist in any way.

The 2017 Human Rights Commission Award committee recognizes the time, commitment, and compassion Ms. Yates has devoted to support those helpless individuals who have no voice. Howard County is safer for the courage, strength and empathy that she has selflessly given to so many.

Human Rights Commission Community Outreach

Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies (MAHRA) - March 2, 2017, Annapolis, MD
Human Rights professionals, advocates, commissioners and supporters throughout the state met to discuss human rights laws, legislative bills and initiatives.

Howard County Veteran's Fair - April 4, 2017, Ellicott City 50+ Center
Commissioners and OHR staff participated in this annual event which provides local veterans (active, guard and reserve) the opportunity to meet with businesses and non-profit organizations dedicated to providing services, support and jobs to veterans.

The Maryland Multicultural State Chapter of NAME (National Association for Multicultural Education) and Howard County Public Schools Spring Conference - April 22, 2017, Marriottsville, MD
Commissioners and OHR staff provided literature, answered questions, and shared information with other agencies. This year's theme was *The Journey to Excellence with Equity in Education.*

PFLAG's Annual Fundraiser "Queens, Queers, and Cocktails" at Historic Oakland Ballroom - May 11, 2017, Columbia, MD
Commissioners and OHR staff attended this annual fundraiser, and provided literature and information to all attendees.

Harriet Tubman Day - September 16, 2017, Columbia, MD
HRC Commissioners, MLK Commissioners and OHR staff distributed literature, shared information, and met with county residents to celebrate this historic landmark building.

50+ Expo - October 20, 2017, Columbia, MD
HRC Commissioners and OHR staff participated and distributed literature, answered questions, and met with citizens during this annual event. Various agencies, organizations, and numerous resources are highlighted and made available each year to assist Howard County's senior population.

Honoring Howard County's Black Pioneers - November 4, 2017

Howard County Friends of Latin-America's Annual Potluck Dinner (HoCoFOLA) - November 4, 2017
This annual event, co-sponsored with the Office of Human Rights, brings together residents and citizens from numerous countries to celebrate the diverse cultures, music, and traditions that make this county a great place to learn, live and work.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission

The Howard County Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission was established by order of the Howard County Executive to "…encourage and coordinate appropriate ceremonies and activities honoring Martin Luther King, Jr…"

The seventeen-member Commission meets once a month at 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive in Columbia, MD to formulate strategies for the annual commemoration of Dr. King in January.

County residents are continually requested to fill Commissioner vacancies and positions on various subcommittees. Commissioners are appointed by the County Executive to serve an initial term of two years.

Persons interested in serving on the Commission should contact the Office of Human Rights at (410) 313-6430.

MLK Commission Members

Bessie Bordenave

Sonja Blake Hamada

Bert J. Hash, Jr.

Hellaine M. Jeffers

Rev. Rodney Morton

Yetta Harper Rogerson

Kurt W. Wall

Maryam Elhabashy

Caroline Harper, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Jonah Hornum

Roberta Kelly, Chair

Namrata Nagarajan, Secretary

Patricia Thorne

Tracey Williams

2017-18 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission Report

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration Event, January 14, 2018:

The Howard County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission presented the Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration on January 14, 2018 at Reservoir High School in Fulton, MD.

County Executive Allan H. Kittleman giving remarks at the Celebration.

The Howard County Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission was established in 1985 by order of the Howard County Executive to encourage and coordinate appropriate ceremonies and activities throughout Howard County honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On May 11, 2015, County Executive Allan H. Kittleman amended the Executive Order 2014-05 updating the membership to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.

The Commission meets once a month at 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive in Columbia, MD, at which time strategies are formulated for the annual January commemoration of Dr. King.

The 2018 event highlighted local youth talent. The theme for this year's program was "If I cannot do great things, I will do small things in a great way". The Commission promoted this theme throughout the year by taking part in multiple events like the 2017 50+ Expo, the Harriet Tubman Day event and Diversity Day.

Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman, Howard County Councilman Calvin Ball and Human Rights Administrator Dr. Barbara J. Sands gave remarks. County Executive, Allan H. Kittleman presented his "Elhart E. Flurry Award" to Bessie Bordenave, President of the Harriet Tubman Foundation of Howard County, MD Inc.

Rev. Dr. Barbara J. Sands giving remarks at the event.

The reception committee made sure that food was available to all the attendees. The committee chair, program committee and the reception committee visited the venue for the planning of the event, met with the principal and staff and secured the requirements for the program. The reception committee reported that this year's event was well attended and members were excited to have so many county school honor student volunteers to help.

County Executive Allan H. Kittleman presenting the Elhart E. Flurry Award to the MLK Commissioner, Bessie Bordenave at the MLK Holiday celebration.

Living the Dream Award:

The Living the Dream committee is responsible for reading through the applications submitted and selecting winners. The "Living the Dream Award" is a special part of the celebration as it recognizes an individual and a community, civic or religious organization that demonstrates and promotes the teachings and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through community involvement. This year's individual recipient was Alice Harris and this year's organization winner was Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Student Essay Award:

The essay committee organized the annual county-wide contest for the MLK celebration. The theme for the essay was "How do you translate Dr. King's vision in today's times?" It was based on the program theme "If I cannot do great things, I will do small things in a great way". Students were encouraged to participate in this contest so they could see the importance of Dr. King's vision is today's times. The committee received 116 essays this year and was very happy with this excellent participation. It shows how interested the students are in the topic. Some of the teachers were very helpful in encouraging the students to participate.

High School Winners:

Aishwarya Srivastava, 12th grade – River Hill High School – First Place
Arethabelle Smith, 10th grade – River Hill high School – Second Place
David Schlichtig, 11th grade – Long Reach High School – Third Place

Middle School Winners:

Emeline DeGiulio, 7th grade – Bonnie Brach Middle School – First Place
Morgan Lane, 7th grade – Hammond Middle School – Second Place
Kaiya Jones, 6th grade – Mayfield Woods Middle School - Third Place

Pastor Matthew Quiano from Celebration Church.

Presentation of colors by the Atholton High School Color Guard and the Reservoir High School Madrigals singing the National Anthem under the direction of Dr. Gregory Knauf.

Attendees during the singing of the National Anthem.

"Celebration of Unity" by the Head Start children and Celebration Church Youth ministry.

Dance performance by Aliah Evans.

Performance
by Celebration Church Youth ministry.

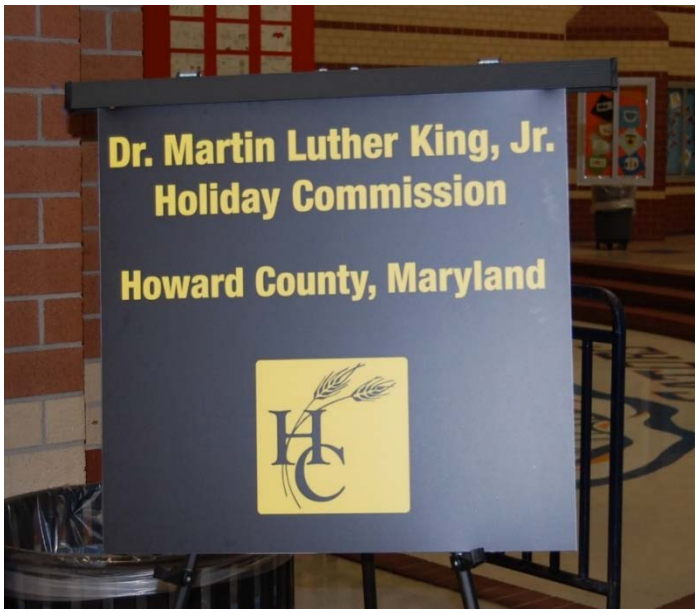
"Glory" by John Legend
performed by Kiera Robinson and her sister.

"Water", dance performance by Reservoir High School Dance Company.

Reception

Ushers at the MLK Holiday Celebration.

Ushers at the MLK Holiday Celebration.



MLK Commissioner, Namrata Nagarajan.

County Executive Allan H. Kittleman with the MLK Commission Chair, Roberta Kelly.

MLK Commissioner Sonja Hamada Blake with guests.

Executive Director of School Administration, Frank Eastham and Reservoir High School Principal Nelda Sims with guests.

County Councilman Calvin Ball greeted by the Ushers at the MLK Holiday celebration.

County Councilman Jonathan S. Weinstein with Delegate Eric D. Ebersole at the event.

Guests at the MLK event reception.

Human Rights Commissioners Joan Hash and Bianca Chang with guests.

Day of Service, January 15, 2018:

The MLK celebration was continued on Monday, January 15, 2018 as the Day of Service and the Kick off was at the Columbia Gateway Government Building in Columbia, Maryland and there were multiple service projects. "A day on …. Not a day off" took place in multiple locations across the county. County Executive Allan H. Kittleman and MLK Commission Chairperson Roberta Kelly gave the opening remarks.

The MLK Holiday Commission in collaboration with the Volunteer Center serving Howard County reported that more than 200 volunteers engaged in over 565 hours of service with 13 local agencies. Some of the projects were:

- The Columbia Art Center and Howard County's Office of Aging and Independence utilized volunteers to create 244 door ornaments and other arts and craft projects for the senior citizens.
- Recipe cards were colorized for Food Bank clients to offer nutrition information and meal ideas.
- $6,500 worth of coupons were clipped for service members to use at their military bases.
- Hands-only CPR, AED and stop the bleed training was offered by the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, Office of the Fire Marshal.

There were many offsite Volunteer opportunities as well.

- Volunteers collected 5,000 pounds of non-perishable food at the grocery stores (Giant, Safeway, Weis and Green Valley) and delivered it to the food bank.
- Chesapeake Restore had 10 volunteers who contributed over 30 hours restocking and shopping at the store.
- Volunteers cleaned the barns and stalls, fed the animals and assisted with general farm maintenance tasks at the Days End Horse Rescue Farm in Woodbine, MD.

County Executive Allan H. Kittleman and County Councilman Calvin Ball at the Kick-off Ceremony at the Columbia Gateway Building.

OHR Administrator Rev. Dr. Barbara Sands, MLK Commission Chairperson Roberta Kelly and County Executive Allan H. Kittleman giving remarks about the Day of Service at the Kick-off Ceremony.

County Executive Allan H. Kittleman with the MLK Commissioners Patricia Thorne and Roberta Kelly.

Kick-off Ceremony at the Columbia Gateway Building.

Volunteers at the grocery stores on The Day of Service, January 15, 2018.