



## TALKING POINTS

## WCHR

### **Waterloo Commission on Human Rights**

#### **Commission Highlights from 2006- 2007**

Highlights of the commission's progress during the calendar years 2006 & 2007.

#### **Case Processing**

Employment; Commission lowered case processing time from over 3 years average process time (3-years ago), down to 18 months turnaround time and still lowering (12 months is the goal standard average), and reviewing avenues for working best practices.

Housing; Commission reduced housing case back log completely and are currently within 100 day processing on all cases. Two years ago there were 20 cases out of compliance over 200 days.

The 2006 & 2007 annual reports which will be soon published will be a great "talking points" to these areas of progress as well as a guide for everyone to measure areas of progress. The reports will then be posted on the city website.

#### **Outreach & Education**

The Commission has recently completed the most active two-year period of outreach and education in its history despite a lesser staff ratio than in previous years (full lists available). This reflects well to the commitment of staff, commissioners, and volunteers to fulfill our outreach awareness mission.

#### **Quality of Life**

In response to the U.S. Department of Labor's November 2006 report showing Iowa as "worst in the nation" at hiring African-Americans in the area of employment. The Commission conducted the following:

Held three public job fairs:

Placed 348 people in front of 45 employers and 38 were hired.

Planning for a diverse workforce sessions was an integrated and required part of the fairs for participating employers.

National ADA Road to Freedom Bus Tour excursion and event in Waterloo/Cedar Falls. This event was a joint collaboration between the Waterloo & Cedar Falls Human Rights Commissions to bring awareness to the 17<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act and progress in the area of disabilities.

### **Major Hurdles**

- The Commission encouraged & city council passage of sexual orientation and gender identification in 2007.
- Responding to community acts of hate of which 4 incidents in 18 months occurred locally. Updated community coalition was established.
- Working in partnership with the Waterloo Police Department in bridging gaps between public perceptions and actual police practices such as "use of force" and "racial profiling".

### **Corporate Funds**

The Commission continues to make some gains in acquiring private corporate funds for our outreach efforts. The following highlights corporate activities.

Contributors over last two years 2006-2007:

Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Veridian Credit Union, Tyson Fresh Meats, Hawkeye Community College (In-kind), Dollar General Store (W. 5th Street), Hy-Vee Foods, Friends of Iowa Civil Rights, Inc., Midwest One Bank, Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission, and YWCA of Black Hawk County.

### **Annual Events**

Human Rights Awards Luncheon (February)

National Fair Housing Month activity (April)

Summer Harmony Day (June)

Cedar Valley Conference on Human Rights (November)  
(Formerly known as the CV "Race Conference")

[A special appreciation to Mayor Tim Hurley, City Council members, and the citizens of Waterloo for continuing support of our efforts!](#)

