

n u a 1
p o r t
0 0 2

Human Relations Commission

Office of the Union County Prosecutor
Andrew K. Ruotolo Justice Center
32 Rahway Avenue ♦ Elizabeth, New Jersey 07202
527-4506 ♦ FAX: 908-527-4625 ♦



Union County Human Relations Com.

March 1, 2002

The Honorable Thomas V. Manahan, Prosecutor
Union County Prosecutor's Office
Andrew K. Ruotolo Justice Center
32 Rahway Avenue
Elizabeth, New Jersey 07202

Dear Prosecutor Manahan:

Thanks to your efforts, the Union County Human Relations Commission continues to take an active role in fostering harmony among the diverse citizenry of Union County since its re-

1998.

Again, you are to be commended for recognizing the citizenship we enjoy in Union County, and for providing the sometimes difficult issues that arise as

In recognition of the support you have given the Commission, we are forwarding to you this Annual Report outlining our accomplishments since March 2000.

We are grateful for your continued support, we hope these projects, educational programs or outreach programs are possible.

Sincerely,
UNION COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Faheemah El-Amin
Co-Chair

First Assistant
Co-Chair

participate in the poster competition, and, our poster competition, a poster contest for youth, held in 2000, cosponsored by Secretary of State by the NCCJ. The poster artwork, entitled "Bridges," submitted by are at Cranford High School, won the Union County level competition, wide contest.

Presentation

annual presentation of Human Relations Awards to local individuals who promote cultural diversity and strong community relations, and who address the Commission.

ed by a Commission Sub-Committee, will each receive an engraved plaque, a poster composition created for the Commission, that incorporates the theme mentioned above. Both the poster and awards are being donated by private

Community Programs

port and attend community programs that address our mission. We participated in the *United Together Against Hate VII* forum, held in May 2001 by the Union County Commission, and the *Interfaith Kristallnach* program, held in November 2001, by the New Jersey Commission.

Training

Due to broaden their understanding of the issues and devise effective strategies, Union County Commission members regularly attend conferences and workshops offered by the Attorney General's Office and offered by the state's Human Relations Commission, developing skills in addressing the issues of bias and racism.

of the State's Office of Dispute Settlements to train our members in conflict resolution. To date, we held two three-hour workshops for our members. In addition to improving our understanding and skills, this training is part of the state's current mandatory 18-hour training requirement for becoming a New Jersey Conflict Mediator.

Improving The Commission

itation of being a Commission that is interested and involved. Being a small organization, we are constrained by the resources and time available among our members to leverage despite our sparse resources, to gain the broadest exposure

to identify opportunities for current Commissioners, and continue to try to

Our Commissioners continue to seek active and interested members that reflects the diverse population of Union County. A Background Information Form is used to aid in this process. Two youth have become Commissioners -- giving them the opportunity to be college-aged citizens.

The following is our Membership Roster effective February 2002, reflecting the

Co-Chairs:

Faheemah El-Amin
Plainfield

First Assistant Prosecutor
James F. Keefe
Union County Prosecutor's Office

Recording Secretary:

Karen E. Positan
Springfield

Members At Large:

Chaunte' Abdellah
Plainfield

Joe Britt
Fanwood

Alfred E. Brown
Plainfield/Cranford

Chief Robert J. Carboy
Fanwood

Sergeant Tracy Diaz
Union County Prosecutor's Office Bias Unit

James W. Glassen
Cranford

Flor Gonzales
Plainfield

Linda-Lee Kelly
Elizabeth

Peter McTiernan
Cranford

Charles Newman
Elizabeth

Joe Novick
Scotch Plains

Ron
Un

Vin
Lin

He
Eli

Ch
Sp

De
Sc

Gr
Ke

Gl
W

Ko
Cr

Ja
Cl

Li
Sc

Ni
Cl

of racial issues and awareness in today's society, we greatly
the luncheon meeting held for Union County Police Chiefs and
Deputy Attorney General Robin Parker and State Investigator
al's Office on Bias Crime and Community Relations addressed
scussed bias crime reporting, hate on the Internet, and related
community.

Between Youth & Law Enforcement: Together: Communication 2000"

"*Friends Together*" program, originally prototyped at Elizabeth High
forcement officers together in a one-on-one setting to build
d mutual trust, has been rolled out in other Union County
School, in Spring 2001; and Hillside High School, in Fall 2001.
een applauded by the media, student participants, and local

Union County Prosecutor's Office, plans are now being finalized
and Roselle Park in Spring 2002. A condensed version of the
oped for special needs of programs for the Probation Officers,
Clergy Network and possibly the Youth Academy. The
efforts to offer the program county-wide. The video produced
ast by many local cable providers, and has been edited into a
HRC and UCPO to generate interest in additional municipalities.

Programs For Youth

Focus on the development of *After School Programs for Youth*.
initial efforts on Plainfield, which can greatly benefit by cross-
ity meetings were held to determine issues and needs.

ity groups of a program involving theatre arts is currently being
s to organize and present a showcase performance of various
in music, dance and entertainment. Drawing on work these
to develop a central theme and bring them all together for a

can provide a comfortable and exciting environment wherein
cipate and see the commonality of coming together and working
is perceived that the force of bringing these disparate groups
can be compelling for the community, and would serve as a
groups participating in a powerful joint effort.

The Union County Human Relation
serves to promote and enco
a more peaceful and ecumenical society
by providing support to bias cri
who are targeted for a cri
because of their race, creed, color, re
age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-
or physical or mental challe
and by intervening to eradicate the
that ultimately cause the cri

The Union County Human Relation
addresses the issues of racism
and their impact on our local
workplaces and neighborh

Our mission, and the focus of our effo
is to actively encourage, develop
and strengthen respect for human rights
among the people of Union

Simply, the Commission celebrates th
that cultural diversity brings to our commu

The Commission consists of a group of Un
from diverse racial, ethnic, re
professional and personal bac

The Commission meets every other mont
and through sub-committees for par

h School tragedy, the Commission actively set about to create to quickly put together crisis-response public forums when

faith Community Network, comprising multi-denominational spread throughout Union County that have volunteered to act ities ensure that we can quickly arrange meetings as necessary e and express concerns about issues and events affecting their

September 11th, 2001 Terrorist Attacks

our support, sponsored an informational program and public 2001 terrorist attacks, facilitated by Deputy Attorney General al Justice's Office of Bias Crimes and Community Relations.

center -- An Evening of Understanding, Healing & Hope, the church in Westfield. The program was primarily designed to foster harmony with Muslim American citizens and featured unity who explained the tenets of their faith and tried to dispel

ed the process of the investigation and the nature and scope of response to ensure public safety.

about the healing process, and a victim/witness advocate ms and their families.

ed good press coverage, and was well received by attendees.

the UCHRC's aim to respond to the community's needs. The identify potential educational programs focused on fostering ng bias and hate, that also can be offered to the various ese educational programs will serve to solidify the shape and awareness and credibility within the community.

the UCHRC issued a press release, which appears on the next

Our mission is to actively encourage, develop, promote and strengthen respect for human rights and cultural diversity among the people of Union County.

Co-Chairs:
First Assistant
Prosecutor
James F. Keefe
and
Faheemah El-Amin

Recording Secretary:
Karen E. Positan
Phone:
908-889-9028
FAX:
908-889-9653

Please send all correspondence to the UCHRC c/o The Office of the Union County Prosecutor; Andrew K. Ruotolo Justice Center; 32 Rahway Avenue; Elizabeth, New Jersey 07202

PRESS RELEASE

FOR

The Union County Human Relations Commission work together "in a spirit of good will and harmony to maintain human dignity in the wake of last week's

Members from the commission, which aims to ce work within Union County to promote peace and statement urging residents to avoid taking any acti judgements or labeling.

First Assistant Prosecutor James F. Keefe, w Faheemah El-Amin of Plainfield, said acting with k is the best response to the horrific bombings. "Now the smoke, dust and ashes to establish a course o the rubble, it is most important that Americans keep a renewed sense of unity and brotherhood."

El-Amin, who is of the Islamic faith, stressed that th that Mohammed and his religion did not stand for equally important not to condemn persons of any p entire nation for the crimes committed by a few ind far from the basic teachings of the holy book Koran

Keefe said the commission would also work to ass and Victim Assistance in the months of recovery. Office Victim Witness Assistance Program and lo comfort to victims as well as make referrals to so response teams, mental health services and victim Elaine O'Neal, the county's victim witness coordina