



County of Los Angeles
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

510 South Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 738-2788
hrc.lacounty.gov

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September 9, 2026

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSIONERS

FROM: Ilan Davidson, President

SUBJECT: **Meeting of the Commission/Executive Committee on Human Relations, September 14, 2026**

**COMMISSION ON
HUMAN RELATIONS**

Commissioners

Ilan Davidson
President

Helen L. Chin
Vice President/Secretary

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Preeti P. Kulkarni
Fredrick Sykes

Vice Presidents

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Dandy De Paula
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Ornella Kacou
Administrative Support
Yvette Baharyans
Valentina D'Alessandro
Oscar Hernandez
Josh Parr
Gustavo Partida
Yadira Pineda-Siordia
Fidel Rodriguez
Paul Smith, Ph.D.
Intergroup Relations Specialists

Pierre Arreola
Deysy Donis-Santos
April Johnson
Monica Lomeli, Ph.D.
Managers

Robert Sowell
Assistant Executive Director
Robin S. Toma, Esq.
Executive Director

Our Commission will meet on **Monday, September 14, 2026, at 12:30 p.m., at 510 S. Vermont Ave., Terrace Level (9th floor), Press Room, Los Angeles.**

You may also join meeting via Microsoft Teams: [Click here to join the meeting.](#)

If you are unable to do so, you may dial in at: +1 213-204-2512,,968713604#.

Please post the agenda outside your location so it is visible to the public, and adhere to other legal requirements (such as timely providing your location address for inclusion on the agenda).

Parking is located at 523 Shatto Place. Please pull a ticket when entering the parking structure. Please take the elevator to the 9th floor and walk along the bridge, which is located towards the northwest corner of the parking structure, to reach Terrace (T) Level of the building. Prior to leaving the facility, please take your ticket to either security desk (Ground level or Terrace level) for validation. **Do not park at 510 S. Vermont Ave. structure. Violators may be towed at vehicle owner's expense.**

Please review and let me know if you have any questions.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please call Ornella at (323) 719-9187 as soon as possible, and no later than 9:00 a.m., Monday, September 14, 2026.

Ornella Kacou

L.A County Commission on Human Relations
Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors
510 S. Vermont Ave., 15th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90020
(323) 719-9187



Los Angeles County Commission on
Human Relations - 510 S. Vermont Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90020 (213) 738-2788

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Monday, September 14, 2026 – 12:30-2:00 pm

LA County Vermont Corridor Building - 510 S. Vermont Avenue - LA, CA 90020
Terrace Level (9th floor) Press Room

Also via MS Teams Video and Audio Conferencing [213-204 2512,,980587174#](#) [Click here to join the meeting](#)

[Our mission: to transform prejudice into acceptance, inequity into justice, and hostility into peace](#)

1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment – Ilan Davidson, President (12:30)

2. Meeting Minutes – Helen Chin, Vice-President/Secretary

Review and approval of proposed minutes of August 3, 2026 Commission meeting*

3. President's Report – Ilan Davidson, President (12:33)

3.1. Welcome Kellie Johnson, Assistant Executive Officer over LACCHR and other county commissions in the department

3.2. Spotlight on a Partner: Ayannah Shabazz of [Bridge Builders Foundation](#)*, new member of LA vs Hate Rapid Response Network

3.3. Report on [IAOHRA conference](#) in New Orleans, August 16-20

3.4. Thoughts about this upcoming 50th anniversary of awards event amidst increased human rights threats

4. Executive Director's Report – Robin Toma, Executive Director (12:45)

4.1. Program, Administrative and Budget Updates

- i Program Updates: [IAOHRA conference](#)* report back; Human rights work (more in committee report below); United Against Hate Week preparations (show ["Not in Our Town" film](#)* preview); update on texting-to-report-hate; report on LA vs Hate murals; [human rights for World Cup games](#)*; HRC actions re: summer increase in anti-Jewish*, anti-Muslim*, and anti-Armenian* hate activity; plans for November elections; Transformative Justice work

- ii Budget and Administration: Continuity of Operations planning; Roles and Responsibilities; other items

4.2. Communications Update

5. Committee Reports* (12:55)

5.1. Human Rights Committee* – Gay Yuen, Chair

5.2. Human Relations Awards Event Committee – Ilan Davidson, Chair

6. Public Comment (3 minutes per person) (1:05)

7. Action/Discussion Items (1:10)

- 7.1. Commission Committees and membership for FY 2026-27*
- 7.2. [United Against Hate Week](#), October 18-24*
- 7.3. [Voting rights and the November elections](#)* (incl. LAVsHate's Vote Against Hate (VAH) campaign – help GOTV and distribute VAH materials)
- 7.4. Commissioner Orientation/Onboarding
- 7.5. Transformative Justice work of the Commission

8. Commissioner Announcements (2 minutes per Commissioner)

(1:55)

9. **Adjournment** – in memory of [trailblazing feminist Gloria Steinem](#)*; of [Peter Cullen](#)*, humanist and voice of Eeyore (Winnie the Pooh); and of [humanitarian and award winning singer/songwriter/actor Dolly Parton](#)*.

For translation to other languages o para más información en español, call (213) 738-2788 or email us.

* Denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item.

Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission at (213) 738-7288 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Human Relations Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by teleconference communication from the following corresponding locations: Jeanette Ellis Royston, NAACP PVB Office, 1460 E. Holt Ave. (Entrance 2 Room 6), Pomona, CA 91767; Derric J. Johnson, 515 S Figueroa St, Los Angeles, CA 90071; Dandy De Paula, 21815 Pioneer Blvd., Hawaiian Gardens, CA 90716; Kevork Keushkerian, 1115 Valley View Ave., Pasadena, CA 91107.

PUBLIC COMMENT

When prompted by staff, members of the public sector may request to provide public comment after each item:

- If joining in person, staff will call upon individuals who signed up to speak on an item.
- If joining remotely via Teams, please use the “raise your hand” feature then unmute microphone once enabled.
- Callers by phone, dial *5 to raise hand, once called upon dial *6 to unmute.



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 South Vermont Avenue, 15th floor
Los Angeles, California 90020
www.lahumanrelations.org
(213) 738-2788

DRAFT MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
Meeting of August 3, 2026

EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE
MEMBERS
PRESENT:

Helen Chin
Ilan Davidson*
Preeti Kulkarni
Fredrick Sykes

GUESTS:

Jeanette Ellis-Royston*
Michael Gi Hao-Cheung

STAFF:

Pierre Arreola
Ornella Kacou

Robin Toma
Siranush Vardanyan

1. **Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples:** President Ilan Davidson was able to participate via Teams so he asked Commission Vice President Secretary (VP-Sec.) Helen Chin to lead the Commission meeting. Due to lack of quorum, VP-Sec. Chin called an Executive Committee meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. with a quorum of the Executive Committee members present (Commissioners Helen Chin, Fredrick Sykes, and Preeti Kulkarni in attendance). She began by reading the LA County Land Acknowledgment, which can be found at the following link: [Land Acknowledgment – \(lacounty.gov\)](http://lacounty.gov). She recognized the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples as original inhabitants of these lands, honoring and paying respect to their elders and descendants; acknowledged that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multi-generational trauma; and reminded us of our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation, and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County.
2. **Review & Approval of July 6, 2026 Meeting Minutes:** The proposed minutes of the Commission meeting of July 6, 2026 as submitted by previous Vice President-Secretary (VP-Sec.) Ilan Davidson was presented. A motion was made by Commissioner Preeti Kulkarni and seconded by Commissioner Fredrick Sykes for the Executive Committee to recommend approval to the full Commission of the June 8,

* This commissioner, and others marked by an asterisk, attended the meeting via internet video (MS Teams link), providing their location address for inclusion on the posted agenda, in compliance with applicable open meeting laws and policies.

** This commissioner, and others marked by double asterisks, attended the meeting via internet video (MS Teams link), but did not provide their location address on time for inclusion on the posted agenda, and were therefore not in compliance with applicable open meeting laws and policies, causing them not to be counted for quorum or for votes.

2026 Commission meeting minutes, as proposed. The motion passed with no opposition and no abstentions.

The Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 12:55p.m. when quorum was reached with Commissioner Gay Yuen's arrival.

DRAFT MINUTES
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS
Meeting of August 3, 2026

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Helen Chin Ilan Davidson* Jeanette Ellis-Royston* Michael Gi Hao-Cheung	Kevork Keushkerian* Preeti Kulkarni Fredrick Sykes Gay Yuen
ABSENT:	Lisa Dabbs Dandy De Paula Derric Johnson	Jason Moss Serena Oberstein
STAFF:	Pierre Arreola Ornella Kacou	Robin Toma Siranush Vardanyan

1. **Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples:** Commission Vice President Secretary (VP-Sec.) Helen Chin called to order the meeting at 12:55pm by reading the LA County Land Acknowledgment, which can be found at the following link: Land Acknowledgment – (lacounty.gov). She recognized the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples as original inhabitants of these lands, honoring and paying respect to their elders and descendants; acknowledged that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multi-generational trauma; and reminded us of our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation, and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County.
2. **Review & Approval of July 6, 2026 Meeting Minutes:** The proposed minutes of the Commission meeting of July 6, 2026 as submitted by previous Vice President-Secretary (VP-Sec.) Ilan Davidson was presented to the Commission. Noting that the Executive Committee had passed a motion to recommend approval of the minutes as presented, a motion was made to approve the June 8, 2026 Commission meeting minutes, as presented, by Commissioner Preeti Kulkarni and seconded by Commissioner Fredrick Sykes. The motion passed with no opposition and no abstentions.
3. **President's Report**
 - 3.1 **Spotlight: new member of our LA vs Hate Rapid Response Network:** ED Toma reported that the LA vs. Hate Rapid Response Network has welcomed a new member organization, bringing the network's total membership to 17 organizations. He noted that staff had hoped to introduce the new

partner during the meeting, but the representative was unavailable to attend.

3.2 Remarks on hopes for the Commission for this coming year: Due to a loss in TEAMS teleconference connection, President Davidson was unable at this time to provide remarks on this item.

3.3 Excitement about the upcoming IAOHRA conference: ED Toma reported that the Commission will send a six-member delegation, including Pres. Davidson and staff leaders, to the upcoming IAOHRA Conference in New Orleans from August 16–20. He noted that staff will present on the Commission's human rights initiatives, including efforts to integrate a human rights framework into County government and the use of major sporting events to promote human rights awareness. ED Toma added that the delegation will provide a report to the Commission following the conference.

4. Executive Director's Report- Robin Toma, Executive Director

4.1 Program, Administrative and Budget Updates

Program Updates: ED Toma provided an update on the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming birthright citizenship, noting its significance for immigrant communities and its relevance to Los Angeles County. He stated that the decision was an important win for human rights, with some caveats, and highlighted its connection to ongoing discussions regarding voting qualifications and civic participation.

i. **(1) Changes in LA vs Hate partners:** Previously discussed in item 3.1.

(2) Latest on text-to-report-hate: ED Toma reported on the upcoming launch of the LA vs. Hate text-to-report feature, which will provide a fourth reporting option. The multilingual platform will allow individuals to report hate incidents by text using guided prompts, further expanding accessibility throughout Los Angeles County.

(3) Preparations for new Seniors Fight Back LA vs Hate training video: ED Toma reported that production of the 20-minute *Seniors Fight Back* training video has been completed and will be released soon. The multicultural training, led by Ron Scolesdang, provides older adults with practical skills for responding to hate and harassment. He recognized Seniors Fight Back founder and director (and LA vs Hate ambassador) Hong Lee's leadership in the training video's production.

(4) Progress on LA vs Hate murals: ED Toma provided updates on LA vs. Hate murals, including continued work on the Palestinian community mural, relocation and restoration of the Jewish community mural, support for a vandalized Pasadena synagogue mural, and restoration options for a mural at Don Knabe Regional Park. Commissioner Chin added that discussions are underway for a potential Chinatown mural.

(5) Human Rights and the World Cup games: ED Toma reported that the Human Rights Reporting and Assistance System will remain operational through October for reporting hate, discrimination, immigrant and labor rights violations, human trafficking, and other civil rights concerns. He also reported that staff assisted residents impacted by the Boyle Heights warehouse fire with

transportation and temporary housing due to ongoing hostile and dangerous environmental conditions.

(6) Planning for the November elections: Commission staff manager Pierre Arreola reported that staff are preparing a 'lessons learned' report for the Election Disruption Prevention and Response Program to inform improvements and recruitment, with plans to expand participation to approximately 60–70 people. Commissioners were encouraged to refer individuals with de-escalation, mediation, or violence intervention experience. ED Toma noted that the program, conducted with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, deploys trained personnel to voting centers and has generated interest from other jurisdictions.

- ii. **Budget and Administration: upcoming visit of Asst. Executive Officer Kellie Johnson at September meeting of the Commission:** ED Toma informed the Commission that Assistant Executive Officer Kellie Johnson from the County Executive Office will attend the September Commission meeting as an observer to learn more about the Commission's work and operations. ED Toma reminded Commissioners that the September meeting will be held on September 14, 2026 (due to the County's observance of the Labor Day holiday on September 7th).

- 4.2. **Communications Update:** ED Toma shared preliminary observations from the FIFA World Cup Human Rights Reporting and Assistance System, noting that awareness of the reporting resources within stadiums was more limited than anticipated. He explained that staff provided feedback to event organizers on improving communication and training so that venue personnel could better direct attendees to available resources. ED Toma stated that these lessons learned will be included in the program's final report and will help inform recommendations for future major events, including the 2028 Olympic Games and the upcoming Super Bowl. He also noted that, despite concerns about highlighting negative issues, incidents involving fans and participants reinforced the importance of maintaining visible and accessible reporting resources.

Committee Reports

- 5.1. **Human Rights Committee Meeting of 6/30/26*:** It was noted that the meeting packet included the prior Human Rights Committee meeting minutes and notice that the next committee meeting is scheduled for August 25.
- 6. **Public Comment:** VP-Sec. Chin inquired if there was anyone wishing to make a public comment, and there was none.
- 7. **Action/Discussion Items**

- 7.1 **Commission committees and membership for FY 2026-2027*:** VP-Sec. Chin asked Commissioners to review the Committee assignment chart and confirm their current memberships and any requested changes. Commissioner Kulkarni noted that she and Commissioner Yuen were not reflected on the chart as expected.

VP-Sec. Chin reviewed each committee with the Commissioners, and the following updates and confirmations were made:

- **Awards/Event Committee:** Commissioners Keushkerian, Sykes, Yuen, and Davidson confirmed their continued membership.
- **Policy and Advocacy Committee:** VP-Sec. Chin confirmed her desire to remain on the Committee. Commissioner Ellis-Royston asked about the Committee's status. ED Toma stated that it remains an active committee but will convene as needed to address particular issues. Commissioner Ellis-Royston requested to transfer from the Policy and Advocacy Committee to the LA vs Hate and Human Rights Committees.
- **LA vs Hate Committee:** Commissioner Michael Cheung expressed interest in joining the Committee. VP-Sec. Chin requested to be removed from the Committee.
- **Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee:** Commissioners Kulkarni and Sykes confirmed their continued membership.
- **Human Rights Committee:** Commissioners Yuen, Ellis-Royston, and Sykes and VP-Sec. Chin confirmed their continued membership. Commissioner Kulkarni expressed interest in joining the Committee.

Commissioner Kulkarni moved to approve the committees and their updated membership . Commissioner Yuen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with no opposition or abstentions.

- 7.2 Request for Board recognition of Terri Villa-McDowell for United Against Hate Week, October 18th to 24th:** ED Toma provided an update on plans to honor former staff member Terri Villa-McDowell. He reported that staff are working with the City of Long Beach to secure approval for a commemorative tribute near the LA vs. Hate mural. He added that the site is also being considered for the national launch of United Against Hate Week, where the dedication could coincide with related events and programming. The motion to request Board recognition of Terri Villa-McDowell passed unanimously with no opposition or abstentions.

- 7.3 Voting rights and the November Elections:** ED Toma reiterated that recruitment is underway for the Election Disruption Prevention and Response Program in preparation for the November election. He encouraged Commissioners to share recruitment opportunities with individuals who have experience in mediation, conflict resolution, or de-escalation, noting that additional personnel will be needed to support the anticipated increase in voting centers and voter turnout.

- 7.4 Commissioner orientation materials:** ED Toma provided an update on the development of the Commissioner Handbook, noting that it includes guidance on Brown Act requirements, meeting etiquette, County training resources, and key Commission policies and procedures. He shared that staff are exploring an interactive, online version of the handbook with scenario-based resources and updated reference materials. Suggestions included adding an organizational chart and providing opportunities for Commissioners to update their profiles, including photographs and biographies, on the Commission website.

- 8. Commissioner Announcements:** Commissioner Yuen asked about plans to continue the Transformative Justice Committee's work. ED Toma expressed support for continuing the work but noted current staff capacity limitations due to the County's elimination of several staff positions. Commissioners discussed incorporating transformative justice and broader human rights topics into future Commission agendas. ED Toma also reported that staff are supporting County implementation and education regarding immigration enforcement policies on County property, including upcoming training with County Counsel. Commissioner Keushkerian asked for confirmation that there are no changes regarding Commissioners' use of AI.

9. **Adjournment:** VP Sec. Chin invited a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:16 p.m. in the memory of Gustavo Adolfo Guerra Vasquez, former Commission staff member, poet, and human relations/social justice leader; Keith Porter, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, Joan Sebastian Guerrero and other persons killed by ICE. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kulkarni, seconded by Commissioner Sykes, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

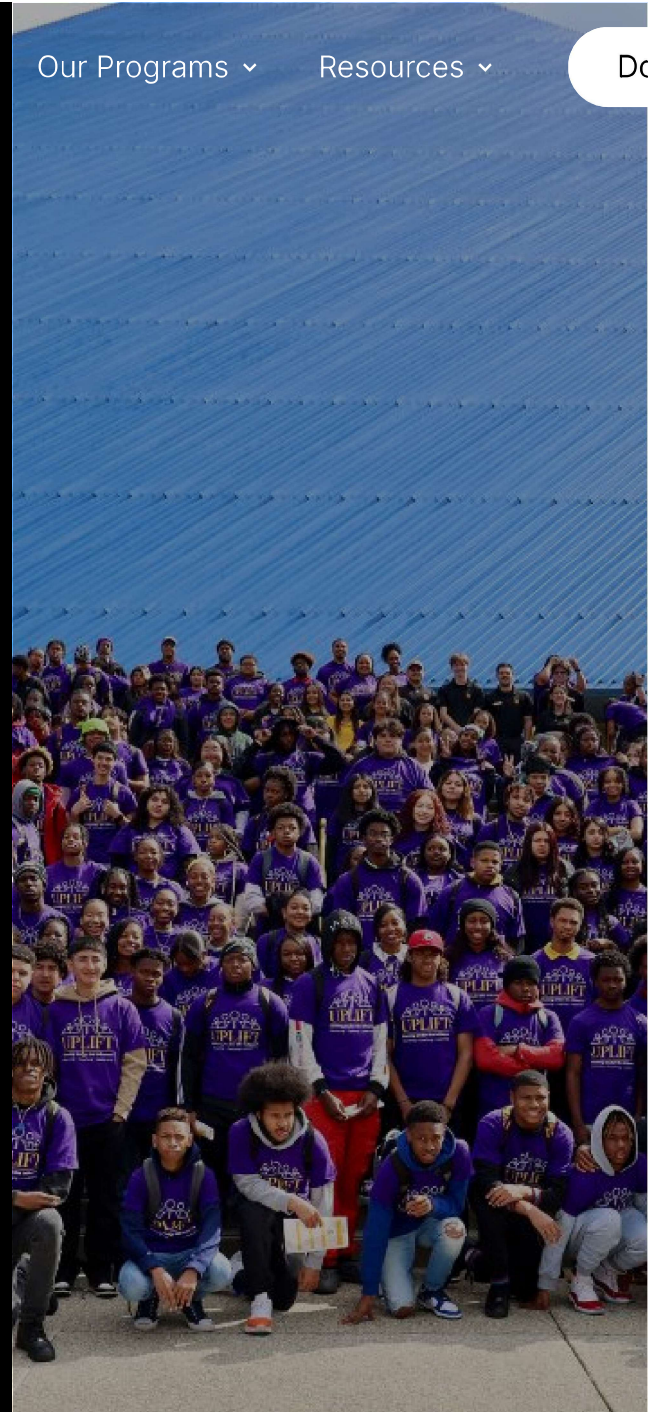
Helen Chin
Commission Vice President-Secretary

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Our Mission



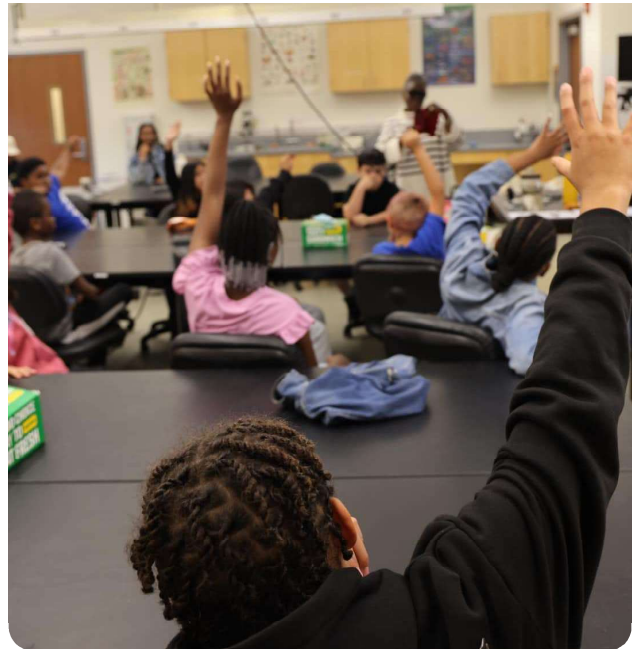
At our core, Bridge Builders Foundation is committed to removing barriers and expanding access to opportunity for youth and communities of color. Through education, mentorship, and community-based programming, we help individuals move from potential to possibility.



Bridge Builders Foundation exists to remove the barriers of race, poverty, ignorance, and despair by providing educational support, mentoring, healthcare awareness, and community uplift initiatives. Our mission is grounded in the belief that when individuals are supported with the right tools, guidance, and access, entire communities can thrive.

Inspiring & Empowering Communities Through Opportunity

Whether supporting a student on their educational journey or partnering with families and schools to strengthen community outcomes, our work is designed to create lasting, generational impact across Los Angeles.





INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

77TH ANNUAL IAOHRA CONFERENCE

From Statute to Street:
CIVIL RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS,
and the RULE OF LAW



📅 AUGUST 16-20, 2026

📍 WESTIN NEW ORLEANS,
NEW ORLEANS, LA



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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

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Robert Corbisier
Anchorage, AK

Anthony Lewis
Detroit, MI

Dr. Leah Raby
Baton Rouge, LA

August 16, 2026

Dear IAOHRA Members, Partners, and Conference Attendees:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 77th Annual Training Conference of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) in historic New Orleans, Louisiana.

Our theme, “From Statute to Street: Civil Rights, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law,” reflects the urgency of turning legal protections into meaningful progress in the lives of the people we serve. Representing agencies whose jurisdictions encompass nearly 250 million people, IAOHRA remains a powerful voice for justice, dignity, and opportunity for all.

This year’s conference features respected experts addressing fair employment, fair housing, hate prevention, and global human rights issues. Our signature Human Rights Tour will highlight New Orleans’ rich history and culture, while the IAOHRA Awards Dinner will honor individuals and agencies whose service exemplifies our values and helps bring human rights home.

We sincerely thank the National Association of REALTORS®, our sponsors, presenters, volunteers, and local host, the Louisiana Human Rights Commission. We also recognize Conference Planning Committee Chair Diane Clements-Boyd and the many member-agency representatives whose dedication made this conference possible.

I encourage you to exchange ideas, build meaningful connections, and leave New Orleans renewed and inspired to advance our shared mission.

Welcome to New Orleans and IAOHRA’s 77th Annual Training Conference!

Sincerely,

Alisa Warren, Ph.D.

President
International Association of
Official Human Rights Agencies





INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCIES

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Dr. Leah Raby
Baton Rouge, LA

August 16, 2026

Greetings, IAOHRA Members and Friends,

Welcome to the 2026 IAOHRA Annual Training Conference! We're so excited to gather with you in beautiful New Orleans, Louisiana.

If this is your first time here or even your tenth, you're in for a treat. New Orleans is a city full of music, flavor, and history. From jazz drifting through the streets to unforgettable Creole and Cajun dishes, the city's blend of French, Spanish, African, and Caribbean cultures creates an atmosphere unlike anywhere else. We hope you take some time to explore, enjoy great food, and soak in the sights as we come together for this year's theme: "From Statute to Street: Civil Rights, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law."

Over the next few days, you'll hear from inspiring speakers and take part in sessions designed to motivate, challenge, and support the important work you do. Even in times of uncertainty, our community remains strong, and being here together reminds us of the power we have when we join forces, share ideas, and lift each other up.

We're honored to welcome a distinguished group of speakers, including:

- Marc H. Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League
- Kristen Clarke, General Counsel, NAACP
- Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré (Ret.), U.S. Army
- Colette Massengale, Senior Policy Representative, National Association of REALTORS®

A heartfelt thank you go out to the members of the Conference Planning Committee for their dedication and countless hours of work. Your passion for advancing human and civil rights shines through in every detail of this event.

And to our colleagues and partners, thank you for showing up, for staying committed to IAOHRA's mission, and for continuing to push forward even when the path is challenging. Your presence here speaks volumes about your dedication to justice, equity, and community.

We hope this conference leaves you refreshed, inspired, and ready to carry the work of human rights forward with renewed energy. Here's to meaningful conversations, new connections, and a memorable week together.

Sincerely,

Diane Clements-Boyd
Conference Chairperson



Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana
LOUISIANA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

JEFF LANDRY
GOVERNOR

DR. LEAH RABY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



P.O. Box 94094
BATON ROUGE, LA 70804-9094
225-342-6969
GOV.LA.GOV/LCHR

August 2026

Dear IAOHRA Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights and the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA), we are delighted to welcome you to Louisiana and to the incomparable city of New Orleans for IAOHRA 2026. From the moment you arrive, we hope you feel what makes this place extraordinary: a deep sense of history, a generous spirit, a living culture, and a people who know how to turn gathering into community.

This conference brings us together under a powerful charge: From Statute to Street: Civil Rights, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law. That theme speaks directly to the work before us. Laws matter, but their true measure is found in whether people can live, work, worship, learn, and participate in public life with dignity and equal opportunity. The Louisiana Commission on Human Rights carries that responsibility every day through enforcement, education, partnership, and service. IAOHRA strengthens that work by connecting agencies and leaders across jurisdictions, sharing tested practices, and ensuring that the promise of civil and human rights is not merely written, but lived.

There is no more fitting place for this conversation than New Orleans. This city has endured, resisted, rebuilt, celebrated, and welcomed generations of people from across the world. Its neighborhoods tell stories of courage. Its music gives voice to struggle and joy. Its food reflects the meeting of cultures. Its history reminds us that progress is never automatic and that justice requires steady hands, clear purpose, and leaders willing to act.

Across Louisiana, you will also find a state rich in tradition, natural beauty, faith, family, and resilience. We invite you to fully experience our hospitality, enjoy our cuisine, explore our landmarks, listen to the rhythms of this place, and build relationships that continue long after the conference ends.

Come ready to learn, to challenge one another, to exchange practical solutions, and to leave renewed for the work ahead. We are honored to host you, proud to welcome you, and excited about what we will accomplish together. Welcome to Louisiana. Welcome to New Orleans. Welcome to IAOHRA 2026.

With Louisiana hospitality and shared purpose,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dr. Leah Raby".

Dr. Leah Raby
Executive Director,

Louisiana Commission on Human Rights
Local Host Chair, IAOHRA 2026

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Tamara K. Jacobson".

Tamara K. Jacobson
Chairwoman

Louisiana Commission on Human Rights

Office of the Lieutenant Governor
State of Louisiana

BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 44243
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-4243
(225) 342-7009

Greetings!

Welcome to Louisiana and the 2026 Annual International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies Training Conference. It is my pleasure to welcome you to New Orleans, and we are honored that you have chosen our state to host this important gathering. Thank you for the vital work you do each day to advance and protect human rights in communities across the country.

While in town, I encourage you to take time to experience all that New Orleans has to offer. Influenced by French, Spanish, African, Caribbean, and Native American cultures, our city is unlike any other in the world. From its eclectic cuisine and vibrant music to its rich history, distinctive architecture, and welcoming spirit, New Orleans and all of Louisiana offer an unforgettable experience.

New Orleans is proud to be a world-class destination for meetings and conventions. We hope you'll enjoy our renowned hospitality and dining experiences, exceptional hotels, and state-of-the-art convention facilities while you're here. Whether you're visiting for business or planning a future vacation, we hope this trip inspires you to return and discover even more of the beauty and culture found throughout our great state.

To learn more about attractions, restaurants, festivals, and adventures across Louisiana, visit ExploreLouisiana.com.

Thank you for joining us, and best wishes for a productive and successful conference. We hope to welcome you back to Louisiana again soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Billy Nungesser".

Billy Nungesser
Lieutenant Governor



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



DR. ALISA WARREN

President

Dr. Alisa Warren serves as the Chief Administrative Officer and Commissioner of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission (SCHAC), appointed in January 2026 to lead the state's efforts to advance anti-discrimination protections and prevention. Established by the General Assembly in 1972, SCHAC works to ensure fair treatment for all South Carolinians by eliminating and preventing unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations, while fostering stronger community relations and mutual respect across the state.

Dr. Warren brings more than three decades of proven leadership in anti-discrimination enforcement and prevention. Prior to joining SCHAC, she spent 18 years as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, where she directed statewide enforcement of Equal Employment Opportunity, Fair Housing, and Public Accommodations laws. Under her leadership, the agency managed and mediated thousands of cases, strengthened compliance systems and maximized efficiencies through modernized technology, and advanced strategic initiatives that improved outcomes and customer service and training for individuals, businesses, and communities across the state.

Recognized nationally as a leading voice in civil and human rights, Dr. Warren has built powerful networks across government, business, advocacy organizations, and community groups. Her commitment to education and outreach has extended across the country and internationally, where she has served as a sought after lecturer, keynote speaker, and industry expert.

Dr. Warren was elected to two terms as President of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, representing state and local human rights agencies serving nearly 250 million people. In this role, she championed the importance of global human rights standards and advocated before the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva, Switzerland.

Her leadership extends across numerous national and state bodies, including service on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Joint Standing Committee; the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Missouri State Advisory Council; the Missouri Supreme Court Commission on Fairness in the Courts, where she chaired Public Engagement; the Governing Board for Central Missouri United Way; the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis Fair Housing Task Force; the FOCUS/Leadership St. Louis Board of Directors; and the Duke University Strategic Leadership for State Executives program.

Dr. Warren's contributions have been recognized with several distinguished honors, including the St. Louis Business Journal's "Most Influential Businesswomen" Award, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. "Women Who Dare to Dream" Distinguished Humanitarian Award.

Dr. Warren earned a B.S. in Human Environmental Sciences, a Master of Public Administration, and a Ph.D. in Applied Social Sciences with a focus on Community Development, all from the University of Missouri. She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



DIANE CLEMENTS-BOYD

1st Vice President

Diane Clements-Boyd was appointed Executive Director of the Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission in January of 2004. Prior to joining the Human Relations Commission, she served as a Program Manager at the Evansville Black Coalition, Inc., from 1995 to 2004. Diane completed the 2025 Bloomberg/Harvard City Leadership Initiative Innovation Track and was appointed to serve on the Evansville Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors. Diane served as Chairperson of the Indiana Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (2014-2025); Currently serves as 1st Vice President of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies; Past President of the Indiana Consortium of State and Local Human Rights Agencies; and serves as a member of the Evansville Commission on Homelessness. Diane received the Freedom Award from the State of Indiana Martin Luther King Commission, the Black Women's Task Force Community Service Award, and the Evansville Chapter of the NAACP Lifetime Community Advocate Award. Diane also serves as the Evansville Branch Co-Chair of the Women in the NAACP (WIN) Committee. Diane is a member of the Evansville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., where she serves as Chapter President. Diane is a graduate of the University of California Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology.



TAMIE DIXON-TATUM

2nd Vice President

Tamie Dixon-Tatum has extensive experience in the fields of Office Management, Office Policies, Procedures, Payroll, Marketing, Human Resources, Public Relations, Radio & Television Broadcasting, Teaching, and Municipal/Community Partnerships. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Telecommunications and a master's degree in Public Affairs. Ms. Dixon-Tatum is a former employee of both DRA and Guide Lamp, as well as a former Union Member of Local 662 and Local 663. Her experience, expertise, and education make her a well-rounded individual and professional. Tamie is currently involved in numerous community programs such as the Strengthening Families Program through Intersect, and she is a youth, community, education, and equal opportunity advocate. Currently, she works for the City of Anderson as the Human Relations director, and a guest radio personality for Vision for Success and the Bill Jackson Show for WHBU 1240AM/103.7FM. Previously, Tamie worked in Madison County Superior Court 2's Juvenile Division as the Juvenile Case Manager for the Reclaiming Futures Program and the Madison County Prosecutor's Office as Office Manager under Thomas Broderick Jr. She has also worked for The Crossing Education Center as the Community & Business Development Coordinator which helped to match youth with job training and community service opportunities. In addition to her extensive employment and educational background, she has spearheaded the Ollie H. Dixon Back-To-School Picnic and Parade for nearly 25 years. This program has provided school supplies for thousands of disadvantaged children throughout Madison County for over two decades. Tamie Dixon-Tatum works tirelessly to serve the community as a youth, education, community, and equal opportunity advocate as well as a multi-media professional.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



KENNETH GUNN
Secretary

For more than 30 years, Ken Gunn has dedicated his career to public service, specifically civil rights law. He previously served as the First Deputy Commissioner of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations for more than 25 years. The Commission serves as the City of Chicago's civil rights agency responsible for investigating and adjudicating complaints of discrimination, aiding hate crime victims, mediating racial and ethnic tensions, and providing anti-bias training. As the Commissioner, Ken is responsible for overseeing the enforcement of the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance and the

Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance. He is involved in all aspects of the Commission's work including directing the Adjudication Division to handle complaints of discrimination, strategizing to address hate crimes and community tensions, and directing personnel and fiscal operations. He also provides legal counsel to the staff and Board of Commissioners and works with the Mayor and City Council to draft and review legislation. Before coming to the Commission, Ken worked for the Office of the Cook County Public Guardian where he represented abused and neglected children. While in law school, he served as an intern with the Illinois Attorney General's Office where he assisted in the investigation and resolution of consumer fraud complaints. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana where he received his Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree in History, and his Law degree (JD). Ken devotes much of his time to several volunteer activities. He serves on several boards and committees including the Center for Conflict Resolution Board of Directors (President), Durban Social Service Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International (Co-Chair), Housing Choice Partners of Illinois Inc. (Co-Chair), Chicago Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Committee, Emmanuel Baptist Church Board of Trustees (Chair). He is also the past Chair of the Cook County Commission on Human Rights where he served for ten years. He is a certified court mediator and serves as a volunteer mediator for the Center for Conflict Resolution.



JAMES E. DAVIS, JR.
Treasurer

James E. Davis, Jr. is currently the Assistant Director of Neighborhood Improvement Services, City of Durham. He has over 20 years of experience in human rights/relations-related work. Mr. Davis has experience in the health, legal, and community outreach fields, combining law school education, public health administration experience, and public speaking skills to encourage and empower others. Since 2001, he has also worked to promote fair and equal opportunities in housing and has worked with youth, both individually and in groups, including through volunteering and coaching.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



TARNYA WHITMIRE
Assistant Treasurer

Tarnya Whitmire is currently the EEO Enforcement Director for the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission. Tarnya Whitmire is a distinguished Veteran of the United States Army, where she served in key roles within Human Resources and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). During her military career, she also held the position of Assistant Inspector General, where her responsibilities included conducting regulatory compliance inspections and leading formal investigations into allegations of misconduct and abuse of authority. Upon her retirement from the Army, Ms. Whitmire joined the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission. She currently serves as the EEO Enforcement Director, where she is responsible for managing a team of EEO investigators, overseeing investigations into employment discrimination complaints, and developing and implementing policies and procedures to ensure adherence to EEO and South Carolina employment laws. Ms. Whitmire is widely respected for her leadership and unwavering commitment to civil rights enforcement. In February 2024, she was a featured speaker at the South Carolina Bankers Association Human Resources Conference, sponsored by Travelers, where she provided valuable insights on workplace fairness and compliance with equal employment opportunity regulations. She holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a concentration in Criminal Justice Administration (CJA) and is a graduate of the South Carolina Certified Public Manager® (CPM) program—a nationally accredited professional development program for managers and supervisors in South Carolina state government.



ROBIN S. TOMA
Immediate Past President

Robin S. Toma is Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, appointed in 2000. He also serves as the head of the Human Relations Branch, holding the position of Assistant Director of the Department of Community and Senior Services, County of Los Angeles. Under his leadership, the agency is working to transform prejudice into acceptance, inequity into justice, and hostility into peace. By building community capacity and focus in key areas, racialized gang violence has been lessened. Through demonstration projects in high schools, the power of integrating human relations strategies into school campuses has brought about greater inclusion, harmony, reduced fighting and conflict, and improved academic performance. The Commission's signature annual report on hate crime in the county has shown a long-term trend downward in hate crime until recent years, while the Commission has invested in hate violence prevention community partnerships and training peacemakers through the countywide dispute resolution program. His published writings include *A Primer on Managing Intergroup Conflict in a Multicultural Workplace*, *Day Laborers Hiring Sites: Constructive Approaches to Community Conflict* (co-author with Jill Esbenshade), and he contributed a piece on racialized gang violence in the book *Uncommon Common Ground: Race and America's Future*. Robin serves as Immediate Past President on the board of directors of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA), and was President of and is on the Board of the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO). He's been a Senior Fellow at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs since 2009 and had the privilege to be part of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government's Executive Session on Human Rights Commissions and Criminal Justice (2006-2008), and the Kellogg National Fellowship/Leadership Program (1994-97).

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

He was appointed by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to serve on the California State Advisory Committee (2012 to present) and helped create and serve on the L.A. Unified School District's Commission on Human Relations, Diversity, and Educational Equity. He served three years on the national interim leadership team of the Within Our Lifetime Network for Racial Equity and Healing. In August 2014, Robin spoke in Geneva on the review of the U.S. Government's compliance with the treaty to eliminate racial discrimination (CERD) and was an invited adviser to the Obama Administration's delegation to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, for the U.S. first-ever presentation on its human rights record as part of the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review process in November 2010. He was also invited to serve on the official U.S. Delegation to the U.N. World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. IAOHRA President Alisa Warren, Robin Toma (Executive Director, Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations), Joann Kamuf-Ward, Deputy Commissioner, NYC Commission on Human Rights), and Jamil Dakwar (International Human Rights Lawyer) participated in an outstanding panel at the UN Human Rights Council meeting in Switzerland in October 2025. Robin is the son of Americans of Japanese and Okinawan ancestry; his mother and her family spent World War II imprisoned in the U.S. internment camps solely because of their Japanese ancestry. Robin's paternal grandfather was an immigrant Okinawan sugar cane plantation worker in Maui. Robin grew up in the Echo Park/Silver Lake neighborhoods of L.A., attending LAUSD public schools. He received a B.A. with highest honors in Sociology and honors in Economics from the University of California at Santa Cruz, and a J.D. degree and M.A. degree in Urban Planning from UCLA. Robin is fluent in Spanish, having studied and worked in Barcelona for two years, and was a teacher in L.A.'s public schools. Prior to working at the Commission, Robin was a staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Southern California for almost 7 years and litigated a wide range of human rights and civil liberties cases in federal and state courts.



ROB CORBISIER
Member-At-Large

Rob Corbisier is the Executive Director for the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights (ASCHR). A graduate of MIT and Vermont Law School, Rob started his career in the U.S. Senate working for Frank Murkowski. After graduating from law school and passing the bar, Rob returned to his home state of Alaska as the Special Assistant to the Attorney General and then was tapped to be one of Governor Murkowski's policy advisors. He went on to serve 5.5 years as an Assistant District Attorney in Anchorage before transitioning to private civil practice at Reeves Amodio, LLC. In 2018, the incoming administration of Governor Dunleavy recruited Rob to come back to the Governor's Office to assist with a significant crime bill. With that accomplished, the following year the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights asked him to apply to serve as the Executive Director to rebuild the agency after a period of significant turmoil. There, Rob oversees all day-to-day operations of the agency and serves as litigation director enforcing the Alaska Human Rights Act with a dedicated team of investigators and attorneys. Under his leadership, the agency accomplished a 40-year goal to bring average investigation times to under one year and significantly expanded outreach.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



ANTHONY LEWIS

Member-At-Large

Anthony Lewis is Director of the Community Engagement and Education Division for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR). He serves as part of the senior leadership team and has held previous roles as Community Relations Specialist and an Investigator with the department. Anthony leads the department's community engagement programming and initiatives throughout the State of Michigan. Under his leadership, the division has built statewide coalitions through creative initiatives like Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT), which includes the acquisition and distribution of \$500,000 in grant funds to support local communities. Other impactful initiatives under Anthony's division include the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes (MIAAHC) and the MI Response to Hate, Hate Crimes and Bias Awareness Campaign. As a passionate advocate for the next generation, Anthony also leads the Department's Education and Youth Initiatives, working with school districts on cultural awareness programming and policy development, and he was instrumental in developing the Michigan Civil Rights Youth Leadership Academy. Additionally, Anthony serves as a commissioner for the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, and he is a highly requested trainer, facilitating numerous town halls, community forums, presentations, and administering programs on cultural competency and civil rights law. He began his career and ascended to management with FedEx Express Corp, serving in leadership roles at multiple locations across Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio. Anthony Lewis is a proud graduate of Florida A&M University with a bachelor's degree in business economics/labor relations and a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



DR. LEAH RABY

Member-At-Large

Dr. Leah Raby is a dynamic leader with a fervent commitment to justice and equality. As the Executive Director at the Office of the Governor/Louisiana Commission on Human Rights (LCHR), she leads the charge in combating discrimination across the state, overseeing investigations and resolutions in employment, banking, lending, and public accommodations. With over two decades of experience, Dr. Raby's expertise is rooted in her 17-year tenure as an investigator at LCHR, followed by her ascension to Executive Director in 2016. Her profound impact extends beyond her role at LCHR, as she is a certified mediator, trained by the Justice Center of Atlanta, with 22 years of experience in resolving disputes and fostering dialogue. Dr. Raby's passion for human rights and education is evident in her 22-year career as an adjunct professor, where she has imparted knowledge in human rights, public policy, healthcare, and business across four universities, both online and on-ground. Her academic prowess is bolstered by a Ph.D. in Public Policy with a concentration in Healthcare Policy from Southern University A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A sought-after speaker and trainer, Dr. Raby has presented at conferences nationwide, sharing her insights on Louisiana's Equal Employment Opportunity laws. Her leadership extends to her role as the former Diversity Director of the Louisiana Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management. She is also an active member of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women of Metropolitan Baton Rouge and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. Recently, Dr. Raby was elected as the Member-at-Large Representative for the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, further solidifying her influence in the human rights arena. Her career is a testament to her unwavering dedication to fostering equality, empowerment, and positive change.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



TEJASH SANCHALA

Atlantic Region Representative

For more than two decades, Tejash Sanchala has dedicated his career to advancing human rights and protecting marginalized communities through both public service and private practice. An award-winning civil rights attorney, Mr. Sanchala has served as the Executive Director of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission since 2019, where he leads the Commission's efforts to prevent and combat discrimination. Prior to joining the Human Rights Commission, Mr. Sanchala built a distinguished career as a sought-after civil rights attorney in private practice. He successfully represented clients in challenging discriminatory policies and practices. His longstanding commitment to justice and equal opportunity has earned him numerous accolades, including the IAOHRA Bill Hale Award.



ANGELA PHELPS-WHITE

Midwestern Region Representative

Angela Phelps-White assumed duties as Executive Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission on March 16, 2020. Director Phelps-White's professional and personal achievements demonstrate a commitment to public service and upholding the rule of law. She has broad experience in the public sector, including nearly seven years with the State Employment Relations Board, seven years at the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and thirteen years as a magistrate with the Franklin County Common Pleas Court. Director Phelps-White also served as a Judge for the Franklin County Common Pleas Court. Director Phelps-White earned both her Bachelor of Science in Political Science and her Juris Doctorate from the University of Dayton. She has served on many boards and commissions, including Women Lawyers of Franklin County, Jack and Jill of America - Columbus Chapter, Amethyst, Inc., Kids Voting, and the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus. She has received numerous accolades and awards, including the Editor's Choice Award from the National Library of Poetry, Member of the Year Award from the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Columbus, and Black Women of Courage honors.



DR. LOVE JONES

Southern Region Representative

Dr. Love Jones, Director, City of Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina. Dr. Jones currently serves as the Executive Director of the Human Rights Department with the City of Greensboro. Her role is dedicated to leading the arm of government focused on promoting community harmony, meeting the needs of marginalized populations, and directly addressing acts of discrimination. Specifically, the departmental focus includes discrimination investigation for Fair Housing and Public Accommodations, Landlord-Tenant mediation, Justice Served Support, International Support, and administrative support for five human rights focused boards/commissions. Additionally, she serves as the project manager for the City of Greensboro's Five-year Strategic Framework. Dr. Love Jones has dedicated her entire professional journey to understanding the personal and professional needs of people.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

She is a social science expert with a particular focus in the relationship between individual satisfaction and the establishment of healthy cultures. As a professionally trained systems thinker, with over 20 years of experience in seminar curriculum design and facilitation, she maintains a genuine interest in the way that people establish identity and build community. In addition to her experience as an executive leader, she continues to serve as a professor of social sciences for 15 years. While not practicing at present, Dr. Jones is also a provisionally licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Dr. Jones earned a BA, as a double major in Psychology and Communication Studies, at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She then earned an MS from East Carolina University in Marriage and Family Therapy from the School of Human Ecology. She returned to UNCG to earn a Doctorate in Cultural Studies with a concentration in Communication Studies. Her research focus includes political economy, most specifically, in the context of race, class, and gender.



PIERRE ARREOLA

Western Region Representative

Pierre Ivan Arreola (aka Pierre Boogie) is an artist, community advocate, and human rights leader of Mexican, Salvadoran, and Mesoamerican Indigenous heritage from Pacoima, California. Inspired by his parents' journeys as migrants and their connection to music and storytelling, Pierre began organizing in high school, co-founding The GR818ERS, a grassroots, youth-led collective that uses Hip Hop culture to uplift the San Fernando Valley. A first-generation college student, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Brown University, where he received the Royce Sport & Society Fellowship and C.V. Starr Social Entrepreneurship Fellowship to strengthen The GR818ERS as a force for social change.

After college, he continued organizing young people while working as a legal advocate with Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County. In 2016, he was recognized as a City of Los Angeles Impact Maker to Watch and named an ACTIVATE arts advocacy fellow. He later co-founded AWOKE, a nonprofit focused on youth and community development, and in 2019, AWOKE and The GR818ERS opened the UNITE Cultural Center, a San Fernando Valley hub for creative transformation, civic engagement, and collective healing. Pierre currently serves as Program Manager of the Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team at the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, where he leads the County's Human Rights Strategy for the FIFA World Cup 2026 and its Election Protection Initiative. He previously led the Commission's Transformative Justice Team, advancing equity and community safety across the county. In 2023, Mayor Karen Bass appointed Pierre to the City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, where he serves as President. He also serves as West Coast Representative and Board Member of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA), Ex Officio Board Member of the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO), and Advisory Board Member of CSUN's Valley Nonprofit Resources. Recognized for his mentorship, advocacy, and community leadership, Pierre has presented at universities and cultural institutions across the United States and internationally. He has been honored with mentorship awards and featured in Alta / A Human Atlas of a City of Angels as one of 100 Angelenos recognized as changemakers. Across his work, Pierre continues to champion youth development, human rights, community healing, and Hip Hop culture through organizing, education, and creative action.



2026 IAOHRA CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thank you

DIANE CLEMENTS-BOYD

Conference Chairperson Evansville-Vanderburgh
County Human Relations Commission

JENNIFER BOOZ

Anchorage Equal Rights Commission

DANA BRIDGEWATER

City of Alexandria (VA), Office of Human Rights

JAMES DAVIS

City of Durham, Community Partnerships & Engagement

KENNETH GUNN

Chicago Commission on Human Relations

LAUREN HARRIS

City of Charlottesville, Office of Human Rights

LASANDRA HUTCHINSON

Cook County Department of Human Rights & Ethics

ROBIN TOMA

Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission

ANTHONY LEWIS

Michigan Department of Civil Rights

SHADRACH MENSAH

Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission

LEAH RABY

Louisiana Commission on Human Rights

TEJASH SANCHALA

Westchester County Human Rights Commission

ALISA WARREN

South Carolina Commission on Human Affairs

TARNYA WHITMIRE

South Carolina Commission on Human Affairs



International Association of
Official Human Rights Agencies

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA

From Statute to Street: CIVIL RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, *and the RULE OF LAW*

📅 August 16-20, 2026

📍 Westin New Orleans | New Orleans, LA

📅 SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2026

12:00pm - 2:00pm

► IAOHRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING | Cotton Room

4:00pm - 6:00pm

► CONFERENCE REGISTRATION | Living Wall

6:00pm - 7:30pm

► OPENING WELCOME & RECEPTION | Riverbend Ballroom

Dr. Alisa Warren, IAOHRA President

Commissioner, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

► FIRESIDE CHAT: VOICES OF NEW ORLEANS

Speakers:

Cynthia Butler-McIntyre

Renowned educational consultant, education advocate and served as the 24th National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Rodney C. Braxton, Esq.

Owner, Managing Partner of Southern Strategy Group, LLC

Suchitra J. Satpathi

Partner, Pelican State Partners

Moderator: Dr. Leah Raby, Louisiana Commission on Human Rights

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2026

7:30am - 5:00pm	► CONFERENCE REGISTRATION Living Wall
7:00am - 8:00am	► BREAKFAST (OWN YOUR OWN)
8:00am - 9:00am	► OPENING CEREMONY Grand Ballroom Dr. Alisa Warren, IAOHRA President Commissioner, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission Dr. Leah Raby, Executive Director Louisiana Human Rights Commission (Local Host) ► CONFERENCE OVERVIEW Diane Clements-Boyd, Executive Director Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission IAOHRA Conference Planning Committee Chairperson
9:00am - 10:15am	► OPENING PLENARY Grand Ballroom Keynote Speaker: Marc H. Morial President and CEO, National Urban League “Understanding the Moment” Facilitator: Diane Clements-Boyd Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



10:30am - 11:45am	► PLENARY SESSION II Grand Ballroom International Human Rights Framework Presenters: Desirée Cormier Smith Co-Founder and Co-President The Alliance for Diplomacy and Justice Senior Fellow Harvard Kennedy School Carr-Ryan Center for Human Rights Fellow Howard University Bunche Center Global Futures Collaborative Robin Toma Executive Director, Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission Facilitator: Ken Gunn, Chicago Commission on Human Relations
12:00pm - 1:15pm	► PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON Grand Ballroom Dr. Alisa Warren, IA OHRA President (Presiding) Keynote Speaker: Kristen Clarke, General Counsel, NAACP Former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Justice (2021-2024)
1:30pm - 2:45pm	► REGIONAL MEETINGS Atlantic Region, Tejash Sanchala, Regional Representative Salon Room Midwest Region, Angela Phelps-White, Regional Representative River Room Southern Region, Dr. Love Jones, Regional Representative Terrace Room Western Region, Pierre I. Arreola, Regional Representative Chairman's Room
3:00pm - 4:30pm	► PLENARY SESSION III Grand Ballroom Fair Housing Forward Keynote Speaker: Colette Massengale, Esq. Senior Policy Representative, Fair Housing Policy NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® Facilitator: James Davis, City of Durham, Community Partnerships & Engagement

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2026

7:30am - 8:30am	► BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN
9:00am - 11:30am	► IAOHRA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING TERRACE ROOM Resolutions, Elections, and Other Organizational Actions
12:30pm	► "IAOHRA Hits-the-Streets" LOCAL CIVIL RIGHTS TOUR Chartered Bus shuttle from Westin Hotel to Flood Wall Mural Group A • Tchoupitoulas Art Corridor Flood Wall Mural Tour • Chartered Bus shuttle from Flood Wall Mural to LA Civil Rights Exhibit Group A • Leon "Duce" Brown II Quintet starts performing at the LA Civil Rights Exhibit, Panel Discussion, Reception: New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center to Welcome Group A • Chartered Bus shuttle from LA Civil Rights Exhibit to Hotel Group A and pick up Group B/C
2:00pm	Chartered Bus shuttle from Westin Hotel to Flood Wall Mural Group B (REPEATED)
3:30pm	Chartered Bus shuttle from Westin Hotel to Flood Wall Mural Group C (REPEATED)
	<i>Note: Chartered Bus maximum capacity is 56-passengers)</i>
12:30pm - 6:00pm	► Self-Guided Tours (Create Your Own Experience) • French Quarter (0.5 miles) • Jackson Square (0.4 miles) • Garden District (1.9 miles) • Riverfront Streetcar (0.1 mile to the nearest stop) • Canal Street Streetcar (0.1 mile to the nearest stop) • Lower Ninth Ward/Hurricane Katrina sites (4.5 miles) • Supreme Court Museum—Plessy v. Ferguson exhibit (0.4 miles) • Tate, Etienne and Prevost Center (4 miles) • William Frantz Elementary School (3 miles) • The National WWII Museum (0.7 miles) • Louisiana Civil Rights Museum (0.2 miles) • Whitney Plantation (45 miles) <i>Note: Distances are approximate and measured from The Westin New Orleans, 100 Iberville Street. Transportation, admission fees, and reservations for self-guided tours are the responsibility of participants.</i>

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2026

8:00am - 9:00am

► **BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN**

9:00am - 10:15am

BREAKOUT SESSIONS I

Salon Room

► **LEADERSHIP & AGENCY MANAGEMENT**

From Policy to Practice: Embedding Human Rights Principles into Organizational Culture

How do civil and human rights principles move from policy to practice? This session explores how leaders embed rights-based principles into organizational culture, accountability systems, and workforce practices. Participants will gain practical strategies for translating legal and policy commitments into measurable outcomes that strengthen equity, public trust, and organizational effectiveness.

Presenter: Tawana Bhagwat, Founder and CEO of Organization At Its Best, Inc.

Facilitator: Tarnya Whitmire, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

Terrace Room

► **CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT**

Civil Rights in a Digital Society: State Innovations to Address AI Bias

This session will offer a clear and practical overview of the evolving landscape of algorithmic discrimination and responsible AI within government agencies. We will examine how civil rights offices can proactively interpret, enforce, and modernize protections to ensure new technologies do not reproduce or exacerbate existing inequities. Additionally, we will explore actionable strategies for identifying, assessing, and responding to algorithmic discrimination at the state and local level, including approaches to enforcement, public sector procurement, community engagement, regulatory design, and cross sector collaboration.

Presenter: Yolanda N. Melville, Director NJ Division on Civil Rights

Presenter: Oneshia Herring, Sr. Vice President & Counsel National Fair Housing Alliance

Facilitator: Shadrach Mensah, Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission

River Room

► **POLICY & LEGISLATION**

So, You Want to Add New Protected Classes?

In 2025, The City of Minneapolis added four new protected classes to our Civil Rights Ordinance. In this session, attendees will learn about the meaningful process staff engage in to turn ideas into actionable protections. Presenters will share details about the new protected classes, engagement strategies, and lessons learned.

Presenter: Manire T. Vaughn, Esq., Complaint Investigations Director, Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights

Presenter: Kaela McConnon Diarra, Esq., Interim Director, Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights

Facilitator: Anthony Lewis, Michigan Department of Civil Rights

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



Executive Room

► SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

The Soul of Resilience: Cultivating Trust and Measurable Community Impact

This session explores how understanding structural inequities allows us to build deep community trust and drive measurable empowerment. Participants will learn to engage diverse populations respectfully, foster collaborative problem-solving, and design initiatives rooted in lived experience that challenge systemic barriers and deliver tangible social justice.

Presenter: Jolan H. Jolivet, Political Strategy, Organizing and Creative Consultant Power Coalition for Equity & Justice

Facilitator: LaSandra Hutchinson, Cook County Department of Human Rights and Ethics

10:30am - 11:45am

BREAKOUT SESSIONS II

Salon Room

► LEADERSHIP & AGENCY MANAGEMENT

Language Access Testing: A New Tool for Evaluating Government Agencies and Improving Services for LEP Residents

This workshop will demonstrate how the Equal Rights Center's language access testing program (sometimes called "secret shopping" or "field auditing") allows the DC Office of Human Rights to effectively enforce the DC Language Access Act, ensuring that residents with Limited English proficiency can access crucial services. Through this program, the ERC and DCOHR have helped move away from a human rights compliance structure that depends on residents to file complaints once services have failed, to systematic, cost-effective data gathering, proactively helping agencies comply with civil rights laws.

Presenter: Elias Cohn, Strategic Initiatives Specialist, Equal Rights Center

Facilitator: Lauren Harris, City of Charlottesville, Office of Human Rights

Terrace Room

► CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT

Fair Housing in a Climate of Fear: National Origin Discrimination and the Rights of Immigrant Communities

This workshop addresses national origin discrimination in the current climate of heightened attacks on immigrant communities. The session will cover fair housing protections for immigrant communities under the Fair Housing Act, relevant fact patterns, practical investigation techniques, and best practices for navigating these cases while protecting impacted communities.

Presenter: Azadeh Hosseinian, Associate Chief Counsel, California Civil Rights Department

Presenter: Nassim Moallem, Attorney, California Civil Rights Department

Facilitator: Tarnya Whitmire, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



River Room

► POLICY & LEGISLATION

Safeguarding the Mission: How Human Rights Commissions Navigate Legislative Challenges

This panel brings together representatives from Human Rights Commissions across the country to discuss their experiences navigating legislative challenges that threaten the scope and effectiveness of their work. Panelists will share strategies for responding to restrictive policy proposals, drawing on recent success stories—including Kentucky's successful pushback during the most recent legislative session.

Presenter: Ray Sexton, Executive Director, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission

Facilitator: Jennifer Booz, Anchorage Equal Rights Commission

Imperial Room

► SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

From Statute to Street: Advancing Civil Rights for Survivors of Violence Through Outreach and Education

Using California's outreach and education efforts related to workplace civil rights protections for survivors of violence as a case study, this interactive workshop explores how civil rights agencies can increase awareness of rights and responsibilities of civil rights protections through plain language publications, language access, community partnerships, and strategic outreach.

Presenter: Ana Mendoza, Senior Counsel, California Civil Rights Department, Outreach and Education Unit

Facilitator: Dana Bridgewater, City of Alexandria(VA), Office of Human Rights

12:00pm - 1:15pm

► LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON | Grand Ballroom

Keynote Speaker: Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré (Retired)

"Leadership for a More Just and Inclusive Future"

A decorated U.S. Army leader with 37 years of distinguished service, Lt. Gen. Honoré is best known for leading the military's response to Hurricane Katrina. His calm, decisive leadership during one of our nation's greatest natural disasters earned him the respect of millions. Today, he continues to inspire leaders across the country through his work in emergency preparedness, environmental resilience, public policy, and servant leadership.

Facilitator: Dr. Leah Raby, Executive Director Louisiana Human Rights Commission

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



1:30am - 2:45pm

BREAKOUT SESSIONS III

Salon Room

► LEADERSHIP & AGENCY MANAGEMENT

Leading with Purpose: Strengthening, Safeguarding and Antidiscrimination Through Strategic Agency Management

This session will explore the process in developing a comprehensive safety plan to combat hate, racism, and discrimination for the FIFA World Cup and discuss lessons learned to show how HRCs can play active roles in addressing discrimination, hate, and extremism during mega-events in their own jurisdiction. We will also look at this as a case study of how the human rights role and purpose of your agency could be strategically expanded

Presenters:

Randy Duque, Deputy Director, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations

Robin Toma, Executive Director, Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission

Deysy Donis-Santos, Program Manager, Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission

Facilitator: Dr. Alisa Warren, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

Terrace Room

► CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT

Disaster Civil Rights Investigation & Resolution Model

DCIRM Foundations Workshop introduces participants to the Disaster Civil Rights Investigation & Resolution Model (DCIRM), a structured framework for equitable, trauma-informed, and legally defensible civil rights investigations within disaster recovery systems.

Presenter: Stella Adams, SJ Adams Consulting

Facilitator: James Davis, City of Durham, Community Partnerships & Engagement

River Room

► POLICY & LEGISLATION

Taking Legislation and Policy Ideas to the Finish Line

Having a policy or legislative idea can be easy. Taking that idea into implementation can be a challenge. This presentation will discuss legislative and policy mechanics and real-world scenarios of creation and implementation through an equity lens. Participants will explore ways to utilize these tips in their own jurisdictions.

Presenter: Jamie Reyes, Director, Lincoln Commission on Human Rights

Facilitator: Anthony Lewis, Michigan Department of Civil Rights

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



Executive Room	► SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT Beyond the Surface: A Simulation for Equity and Structural Change Participants will learn about historical and current barriers that perpetuate inequities, then engage in a simulation as investigators, complainants, and respondents with different lived experiences and gain understanding of structural barriers. Participants will leave with increased empathy and renewed ideas to improve their structures for equitable and just community impact. Presenters: Karina Sanchez, Senior Investigator, City of Des Moines Manisha Paudel, Director and Chief Equity Officer, City of Des Moines Facilitator: Lauren Harris, City of Charlottesville, Office of Human Rights
3:00pm - 4:15pm	► LEGAL UPDATE PLENARY SESSION Grand Ballroom Civil Rights, Human Rights & the Rule of Law Presenters: Samuel T. Brandao, Director, Civil Rights & Federal Practice Clinic, Tulane University Law School Christopher Brancart, Partner, Brancart & Brancart Facilitator: Tejash Sanchala, Westchester County Human Rights Commission
6:00pm - 8:00pm	► HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS DINNER Grand Ballroom ARTHUR L. GREEN AWARD <i>Presented to an IAOHRA member for their lifelong advocacy of civil and human rights for the advancement of racial and/or social justice.</i> Recipient: Marvin Caldwell, Chief of Staff, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission BILL HALE AWARD <i>Presented to an organization or individual who promoted civil and human rights in their official capacity and has provided leadership in the development of programs to safeguard the human and civil rights of all people in their corporation and beyond.</i> Recipient: Denise Miranda, Commissioner, New York State Division of Human Rights INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD <i>Presented to an IAOHRA member for their continuing commitment to equal opportunity and civil rights, demonstrated through efforts to create and implement high-caliber programs for civil rights enforcement professionals and their communities.</i> Recipient: Randy Duque, Deputy Director, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations INTERNATIONAL AWARD <i>Presented to an individual or organization for outstanding international efforts to advance civil and human rights.</i> Recipient: Robin Toma, Executive Director, Los Angeles Human Relations Commission

2026 IAOHRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA



6:00pm - 8:00pm

HUMAN RIGHTS CHAMPION AWARD

Presented to a local non-IAOHRA member advocate or organization for outstanding efforts to advance "Human Rights At-Home."

Recipient: Loyce Pierce-Wright, Board President of the New Orleans YWCA, and retired Executive Director of the Louisiana Human Rights Commission

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Distinguished award presented to notable national human and/or civil rights leaders and the out-going IAOhRA President.

Recipients:

Kristen Clarke, General Counsel, NAACP

Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré, Retired- U.S. Army

Marc H. Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League

Dr. Alisa Warren, IAOhRA President (2022-2026)

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2026

8:30am - 8:50am

► INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

9:00am - 10:00am

► CLOSING PLENARY SESSION | Grand Ballroom (BREAKFAST PROVIDED)

Keynote Speaker: Michael Li, Senior Counsel, Brennan Center Democracy Program

"The Battle for Fair Maps: Law, Power, and the People"

Facilitator: Diane Clements-Boyd, Evansville-Vanderburgh County Human Relations Commission

10:15am-11:15am

► WRAP-UP

From Statute To "My" Street: Civil Rights, Human Rights, And The Rule Of Law

Presenter: Tarnya Whitmire, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

Facilitator: Dr. Alisa Warren, South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

11:15am-11:30am

► CLOSING REMARKS AND CONFERENCE ADJOURNMENT

SPEAKERS', PRESENTERS' & MODERATORS' BIOGRAPHIES



Stella Adams is a distinguished civil rights advocate, consultant, and media personality based in Durham, North Carolina. She serves as the Owner and CEO of S J Adams Consulting, a comprehensive civil rights research and consulting firm that collaborates with non-profit organizations, government agencies, and industry stakeholders to advance fair housing, fair lending, diversity, and environmental justice initiatives. Ms. Adams is widely recognized for her expertise in the Fair Housing Act and its regulations, as well as her authoritative knowledge of predatory lending and small business lending investigative techniques. Her insights and research have made her a sought-after speaker at numerous national and regional conferences sponsored by prominent organizations such as HUD, the Federal Reserve Banks, and the NAACP. In addition to her consulting work, Ms. Adams is the host of the popular podcast "Doing Justice Brings Joy!" which airs weekly on PodTv.tv, YouTube, and other streaming platforms. Her media presence complements her advocacy efforts, allowing her to reach a broad audience with messages promoting justice and equity. Ms. Adams has received numerous accolades for her contributions to civil rights and advocacy, including the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies.



Tawana Bhagwat is Founder and CEO of Organization At Its Best, Inc., and a trusted executive advisor with more than 25 years of experience helping organizations translate values, policies, and strategic priorities into measurable results. She has led organizational transformation across corporate, nonprofit, and international development sectors. A former Chief People Officer and senior HR executive with organizations including Procter & Gamble, Coty, Mercy Corps, and Global Communities, she specializes in executive coaching, leadership accountability, organizational transformation, culture change, talent strategy, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and change management. Tawana partners with leaders, boards, and organizations to navigate complex workforce, equity, and culture challenges and build high-performing, equitable, and mission-driven cultures. She is the Past Board Chair of Associated Black Charities.



Christopher Brancart is a partner in Brancart & Brancart, a law firm located in Pescadero, California specializing in fair housing investigation and litigation. Chris graduated with honors from the University of Texas School of Law in 1985. Following law school, he clerked for the Honorable Vincent McKusick, Chief Justice of Maine, and then taught appellate advocacy and administrative law at Western State University College of Law. From 1987 to 1989, Chris worked as a staff and then supervising attorney at the Legal Services Program in Pomona, California. Since entering private practice in 1989, Chris has focused his practice on litigating cases that expand fair housing rights, devising methods that improve fair housing investigations, and supporting fair housing attorneys and advocates through trainings and co-counseling. He has also represented discrimination victims in several leading federal fair housing cases.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Sam Brandao is a law professor and federal civil rights litigator whose research examines how civil rights law intersects with artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. He directs Tulane Law School's Civil Rights and Federal Practice Clinic, where full-time faculty supervise third-year law students in the direct representation of people who have experienced civil rights violations and cannot afford an attorney. The clinic's docket spans the full range of federal civil rights litigation, with substantial focus in recent years on police violence and on housing and employment discrimination. His scholarship also extends to neuroscience and end-of-life medical care.

Before joining Tulane's faculty, Sam clerked for U.S. District Judge Eldon E. Fallon of the Eastern District of Louisiana and for Judge Jacques L. Wiener, Jr. of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He then completed a two-year Skadden Fellowship at Southeast Louisiana Legal Services in New Orleans, where as a staff attorney he litigated housing discrimination cases on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Sam is a New Orleans native, a musician, and a former high school English teacher.



Rodney Braxton, as President of SSG, brings the highest levels of public service to the firm. He is experienced in policy development, governmental and local affairs, legislative relations, budgetary issues, capital improvement projects and enjoys a reputation for "persuasive negotiation skills." During his career, Rodney has been in positions of administrative and budgetary oversight over agencies with budgets exceeding several million dollars.



Dr. Cynthia Butler McIntyre is a renowned educational consultant, advocate, and activist, and the 24th National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. A lifelong educator, she retired as human resources director for the Jefferson Parish School System, where for more than 20 years she supervised over 3,500 employees and shaped policies that strengthened the district's workforce. A former kindergarten teacher, assistant principal, summer school principal, and personnel administrator, Butler McIntyre has influenced generations of students and educators. Her experience also includes serving as Executive Director of the Tech Prep Summer Program at Delgado Community College and as Assistant Coordinator of Field Experiences at the University of New Orleans, supervising early childhood student teachers. New Orleans native, she earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from Dillard University, a Master of Education from the University of New Orleans, and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Dillard University and an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Christian Bible College of Louisiana. Her distinguished service includes leadership roles with the National Alliance of Black School Educators, the Louisiana Association of School Personnel Administrators, and the Algiers Gretna NAACP, where she served as founding president. In 2011, President Barack Obama appointed her to the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation. During her presidency of Delta Sigma Theta (2008–2013), the sorority named an elementary school in Cherette, Haiti in her honor. She also serves on the National Board of the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, and is a member of The Links, Inc. and the National Association of University Women. She was also named best female alumna of an Historically Black College or University (HBCU) by HBCU Digest.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Kristen Clarke is the General Counsel of the NAACP. She previously served as the 19th Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Justice between 2021 and 2025. In this role, she led enforcement of federal civil rights laws across the country.

Under her leadership, the Division established new enforcement records for prosecutions of hate crimes, and law enforcement misconduct cases, and achieved groundbreaking results in areas including redlining, environmental justice, jail and prison reform, education, fair housing, voting rights and more. Clarke's tenure brought renewed focus on victims and survivors of violence. She supervised successful prosecutions of defendants tied to the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna

Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tyre Nichols and many others. Clarke is a frequent public speaker who has helped to shape the national dialogue around issues of civil and constitutional rights, and race and democracy. She has testified about these issues before the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. She also works to train the next generation of civil rights lawyers and advocates. Clarke leads the Civil Rights Clinic at Howard University School of Law, a clinic that was started by Charles Hamilton Houston. Clarke is a lifelong civil rights lawyer, and a graduate of Harvard University and Columbia Law School.



Elias Cohn joined the ERC in July 2017. In his role as Strategic Initiatives Specialist, he has worked to expand the ERC's civil rights testing investigations into spaces outside the organization's traditional areas of fair housing and accessibility. Elias has led multiple testing investigations focused on language access, fair employment, LGBTQ rights, and housing conditions. Elias previously worked as the Fair Housing Coordinator at Housing Counseling Services, Inc., where he worked with service providers, as well as consumers and landlords, to identify and respond to discriminatory housing practices.



Desirée Cormier Smith is co-president and co-founder of The Alliance for Diplomacy and Justice, a nonprofit founded to advocate for human rights as a core pillar of U.S. foreign policy through Congressional education, public engagement, and global partnerships. She is also a Senior Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Carr-Ryan Center for Human Rights and a Fellow at the Bunche Center for International Affairs at Howard University. She serves on the Advisory Board of Foreign Policy for America and the Board of the National Capitol Area Chapter of the UN Association.

From 2022 until 2025, she served as the inaugural U.S. Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice at the Department of State, where she worked to promote the human rights of people marginalized because of their race or ethnicity through U.S. foreign policy. She has held roles across civil society, the private sector, and the public sector all with the focus on building a more equitable and just world and an unyielding commitment to racial justice. She earned undergraduate degrees from Stanford University in political science and psychology and a master's degree in public policy from Harvard Kennedy School.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Deysy Donis-Santos, a graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz, brings nearly 15 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, specializing in social services, community engagement, and program development. She has led the design and implementation of comprehensive services across 73 affordable housing communities throughout Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties, including overseeing 17 after-school programs. Her work includes managing cross-sector partnerships, ensuring compliance with government regulations, and overseeing grant-funded programs. In her current role as Program Manager for LA vs Hate at the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission, Deysy leads a countywide initiative focused on hate prevention, response, and community healing. She oversees strategic partnerships and a network of community-based organizations to support survivors of hate, coordinates rapid response efforts, and helps drive public awareness and systems-level solutions to combat hate and discrimination across Los Angeles County.



Randy Duque is the Deputy Director of the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR)'s Community Relations Division - the "peacemaking" unit of the agency. He served as Acting Executive Director in 2025 and 2021 as the first Asian American to lead the department. Randy's responsibilities cover several areas including: civil rights, intercultural relations, hate and extremism prevention and response, victim services, immigrant and refugee issues; and conflict intervention, mediation, and de-escalation. He has presented at national and international forums and consulted for agencies in the US and Europe on strategies to combat hate and create strong community-government-law enforcement partnerships.

Randy's background covers the full spectrum of conflict management. He received his master's degree in communication and conflict; and bachelor's degree in anthropology at Temple University where he was also an adjunct instructor. He is a skilled martial arts practitioner and instructor; and served ten years in the infantry with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. In his spare time, Randy plays bass and guitar in several groups of different genres of music including a Filipino folk string ensemble and a Ukrainian folk rock band.



Oneshia Herring serves as Senior Vice President and Counsel for Consulting and Compliance at the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA). She leads NFHA's efforts to provide high-impact consulting and compliance services to financial institutions, housing providers, government agencies, insurance companies, and other entities. Her work focuses on helping organizations identify, assess, and mitigate fair housing and fair lending risks. She uses data-driven analytics to guide legal reviews, strategic recommendations, and program development aimed at expanding homeownership and credit access for historically marginalized communities.

Oneshia brings deep expertise in fair lending, fair housing, civil rights enforcement, and regulatory compliance. She spent nearly a decade at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in the Civil Rights Division, serving as a Senior Trial Attorney in the Housing and Civil Enforcement Section and later as Senior Counsel in the Office of the Assistant Attorney General. In these roles, she led Division-wide initiatives and litigated major fair housing and fair lending cases that secured several million dollars in relief for harmed individuals. She also served as Deputy Director in the Office for Civil Rights at the DOJ's Office of Justice Programs, where she helped ensure that federal funds promoted equity and did not support discriminatory practices.

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PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES

Oneshia is the Immediate Past Chair of the DOJ Association of Black Attorneys (DOJABA). She currently serves on the board of the Civil Rights Division Alumni Association and is an Advisory Committee member for The Justice Connection. Earlier in her career, Oneshia was Senior Policy Counsel at the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL), a nonprofit research and policy organization affiliated with Self-Help Credit Union, the nation's largest community development financial institution. At CRL, she helped craft key legislative solutions to address the foreclosure crisis and advocated for stronger federal protections against predatory lending and mortgage servicing abuses. Oneshia began her legal and policy career on Capitol Hill as a Congressional Fellow with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. She later served as Counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, where she contributed to several major housing reform bills.

A recipient of the National Bar Association's 40 Under 40 Award, Oneshia is active in numerous civic and professional organizations, including the National Bar Association, Washington Bar Association, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. Oneshia earned a B.S. from Florida State University, where she was a Florida Bright Futures Scholar; an M.A. from the University of Central Florida; and a J.D. from North Carolina Central University School of Law. She is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and a professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law.



Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré (Ret.) is a highly respected retired U.S. Army officer who served for 37 years, culminating as the 33rd Commanding General of the First Army. A native of Louisiana, he is widely recognized for leading the military's response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 as Commander of Joint Task Force Katrina. His decisive leadership, straightforward communication style, and commitment to serving those affected by the disaster earned him national recognition and widespread acclaim. Since retiring from the Army in 2008, Lt. Gen. Honoré has remained an influential voice on emergency preparedness, leadership, and environmental resilience. He is the founder of the GreenARMY, an organization dedicated to protecting Louisiana's environment and strengthening community preparedness for natural disasters. He has also served as a trusted advisor on disaster response and public policy, continuing his lifelong commitment to public service. Lt. Gen. Honoré is a sought-after speaker who inspires audiences with his insights on leadership, crisis management, resilience, and service.



Azadeh Hosseinian is an Associate Chief Counsel at the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) where she investigates and enforces individual and systemic complaints of housing discrimination. Azadeh joined the Department in 2020 as Staff Counsel. Azadeh has a strong background in enforcing civil rights laws. Prior to CRD, Azadeh was a Staff Attorney at the Southern California Housing Rights Center in Los Angeles, where she represented tenants in challenging discriminatory housing practices.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Jolan Herbert Jolivet operates at the intersection of national security, public policy, and community advocacy. He serves as a Captain and Intelligence Officer with the 159th Fighter Wing, having led his Intel flight in Japan, participated in NATO exercises in Germany, and served as the unit's CGOC Communications Chair.

On the civilian side, Jolan is a seasoned independent strategist providing expert guidance in federal, military, and state affairs. His eight-year tenure in the Louisiana Governor's Office included serving as Assistant Director of Disability Affairs, spearheading the state's 2020 Census efforts, establishing "Black Chamber Day" at the State Capitol, and leading the statewide expansion of the Dolly Parton

Imagination Library. A Lafayette native and UL Lafayette alumnus, Jolan remains deeply connected to his community. In 2025, he was appointed to the inaugural College of Liberal Arts Advisory Board. His civic commitment is further reflected in his past leadership as Chairman of the Lafayette Parish Democratic Executive Committee and his board service for the Greater Southwest Louisiana Black Chamber of Commerce. Driven by a steadfast commitment to service, Jolan excels whether briefing aircrews on global tactics or advising on complex governmental strategy.



Michael Li serves as Senior Counsel for the Brennan Center's Democracy Program, where his work focuses on redistricting, voting rights, and elections. Prior to joining the Brennan Center, Mr. Li practiced law at Baker Botts L.L.P. in Dallas for ten years and was author of a widely cited blog on redistricting and election law issues that The New York Times called "indispensable." He is a regular writer and commentator on election law issues, appearing on PBS Newshour, MSNBC, and NPR, and in print in The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, Roll Call, Vox, National Journal, Texas Tribune, Dallas Morning News, and San Antonio Express-News, among others.

Mr. Li received his J.D., with honors, from Tulane Law School and his undergraduate degree in history from the University of Texas at Austin.



Chhaya Malik serves as the Deputy Director of Dispute Resolution at the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), where she leads a team of highly skilled neutrals dedicated exclusively to mediating and resolving civil rights disputes brought by Californians. In April 2025, she completed her tenure as Chair of the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation (JNE) after having been appointed by the California State Bar Board of Trustees.

Prior to joining CRD, Chhaya practiced as a mediator and as an attorney focused on complex litigation, government service, and public interest advocacy. Chhaya served as Special Counsel at Ramsey & Ehrlich spearheading investigations into misconduct, as well as defending individuals in

enforcement actions brought by governmental authorities. Chhaya also served at the United States Department of State working on human trafficking and as civil litigator at Hogan Lovells LLP. She was the Thurgood Marshall Fellow at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area and served as counsel at the Advancement Project working on a wide range of matters related to voting rights, race discrimination, and poverty law.

Chhaya holds both her J.D. and an undergraduate degree in Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Colette Massengale, Esq., AHWD, GSI, joined NAR's Advocacy Team on September 1st, 2022, where she serves as Senior Policy Representative for Fair Housing. Prior to joining NAR, Colette was Director of Professional Development & Member Engagement at Maryland REALTORS®. In that role, she served as staff liaison to the DEI Advisory Group, the REALTOR® Institute GRI Advisory Group, the Leadership Academy Advisory Group, the Professional Standards Committee, and the Grievance Committee. She also spent over ten years serving as Senior Attorney in the Legal Affairs Department at Maryland REALTORS® where she enjoyed staffing the Statewide Forms Committee, engaging with members on the Legal Hotline, training on the NAR Code of Ethics, and teaching legal courses.

Colette is a native Washingtonian. She attended Oberlin College in Oberlin, OH and received her Juris Doctorate Degree from the Washington College of Law at American University.



Kaela McConnon Diarra leads the City of Minneapolis' Civil Rights Department. The Department's mission is to protect and advance human rights through enforcing civil rights protections with accountability and impartial investigations to empower community. The Department's day-to-day work includes investigating allegations of discrimination, police misconduct, and labor standards violations, as well as doing contract compliance work to ensure equity in City contracting. Kaela has worked for the Department for more than ten years, serving previously as the Department's Deputy Director, the Division Director over the Complaint Investigations and Labor Standards divisions, and as an investigator on discrimination cases. She regularly teaches as an adjunct instructor at the

University of Minnesota Law School, having previously taught Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Moot Court and Law in Practice. Kaela holds a Juris Doctor from Mitchell Hamline School of Law and previously clerked at the Minnesota Court of Appeals.



Yolanda N. Melville is the Director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. As Director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, Melville oversees the agency's forward looking work at the intersection of civil rights and emerging technology. Under her leadership, DCR has advanced its Civil Rights and Technology Initiative, including the Civil Rights Innovation Lab and Algorithmic Fairness Project, to address discrimination risks associated with artificial intelligence and automated decision making tools. Melville previously served as Senior Counsel to the New Jersey Attorney General and Director of Community Engagement, a liaison to stakeholders across the state tasked with connecting them with the Office of the Attorney General's initiatives. Melville has served as both a moderator and nationally recognized speaker on leadership and professional development, voting rights and housing issues. She has collaborated with some of the country's greatest social justice leaders and has served in various leadership roles within state and national civil rights organizations.

Before joining the Office of the Attorney General, Melville was a partner at Cooper Levenson, P.A., in Atlantic City, NJ, where she represented public and corporate clients in various stages of civil litigation in federal and state courts. Melville clerked for the Honorable Susan F. Maven in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division. She received her B.A. in English and Government from the College of William and Mary, M.S. in Criminal Justice from Virginia Commonwealth University, and J.D. from Howard University Law School, where she was the managing editor of the Human Rights and Globalization Law Review.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Ana Mendoza (she/her) serves as Senior Counsel in the Outreach and Education Unit at the California Civil Rights Department, where she develops and delivers trainings that help Californians understand their rights and responsibilities under state civil rights laws. Her current work focuses on public education and outreach, including on workplace protections for survivors of violence. Ana brings more than a decade of experience advancing civil rights and civil liberties through legal advocacy, public policy advocacy, community engagement, and public education. Throughout her career, she has worked to address issues involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, equal access, privacy, and other civil rights and civil liberties protections in employment and education.

Her work has earned her two California Lawyer of the Year (CLAY) awards as well as recognition from UCLA School of Law's Public Interest Program for advancing civil rights and educational equity. Ana is a graduate of Macalester College and UCLA School of Law, where she specialized in Critical Race Studies.



Nassim Moallem serves as an Attorney with the California Civil Rights Department's Legal Division. In her role, Moallem enforces California civil rights laws, including protections against unlawful discrimination in areas such as housing and employment. She strives to obtain meaningful relief that advances equity and addresses systemic injustices. Most recently, she has helped obtain substantive settlements in cases involving source of income discrimination against a Section 8 tenant, and violations of California's Fair Chance Act which prevented the hiring of individuals with criminal history. Prior to joining the Civil Rights Department, Moallem was an acting supervising attorney with the Housing Program at the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, where she advocated for tenants'

rights and defended tenants facing eviction proceedings. Nassim received her J.D. from USC Gould School of Law and her B.A. in Women's Studies and Political Science from San Diego State University.



Marc Morial, one of the few national leaders to possess "street smarts," and "boardroom savvy," is the transformative President and CEO of the National Urban League, the nation's largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization.

He served as the highly successful and popular Mayor of New Orleans as well as the President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Marc previously was a Louisiana State Senator and was a lawyer in New Orleans with an active, high-profile practice.

He is a leading voice on the national stage in the battle for jobs, education, housing, health, voting rights, equity, and entrepreneurship.

Marc is a published author; his leadership book, *Gumbo Coalition: 10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, United, and Achieve* has been widely acclaimed, and his column entitled *To Be Equal*, reaches hundreds of thousands.

He is the host of the weekly syndicated television show, *America's Black Forum*.

A graduate of Georgetown University Law Center, and the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Economics and African American Studies, he has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential Black Americans by *Ebony* Magazine, one of the top 50 Non-Profit Leaders by the *Non-Profit Times*, one of the 100 Most Influential Black Lawyers in America and he has also been inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta, GA.

Marc and his father, the late Ernest "Dutch" Morial, are history makers as the first African American father/son mayors in the U.S. and were the subject of a Double Jeopardy question on the legendary Jeopardy television game show in the 1990s.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Manisha Paudel currently serves as the Director of Community Impact & Relations Department and was also the Chief Equity Officer for the City of Des Moines. She is a certified intercultural development inventory qualified administrator and an organizational equity facilitator.



Jamie Reyes currently serves as the Director of the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights for the City of Lincoln. An Omaha, Nebraska native, Jamie received her B.A. in Sociology and J.D. from the University of Nebraska. Her time at Nebraska spurred her interest of working in public service, spending 20 years with the State of Nebraska at two agencies- Nebraska Commission on Industrial Relations and Nebraska Public Service Commission. She is a member of the Nebraska State Bar Association and the American Bar Association and serves her community as an active member of the Xi Omicron Zeta graduate chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated.



Karina Sanchez has been serving as a Human Rights Investigator for the City of Des Moines for nearly five years, and previously managed a satellite office of an immigration law firm. She currently emphasizes in providing training to housing providers, employers and businesses as well as leads compliance enforcement efforts. She is a certified mediator.



Suchitra J. Satpathi has practiced law in Louisiana since 2000. She holds a B.A. in English from Xavier University of Louisiana, an M.A. in African American Studies from Temple University, and a J.D. from Temple University School of Law. Since 2000, she has been deeply involved in Louisiana governmental affairs at the federal, state, and municipal levels, serving in roles including Executive Director of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus and facilitating the establishment of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus (LLBC) PAC. She also served as an Associate Professor of English at Baton Rouge Community College, where she was recognized as a Who's Who in American Colleges honoree and received a 2004 NISOD Award for Excellence in Teaching from the University of Texas at Austin.

In 2010, she transitioned to local government, serving as Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu's Director for State, Federal and International Affairs, Boards and Commissions, and Executive Counsel for the City of New Orleans. She is currently a Partner and Principal at Pelican State Partners & The Advocacy Partners, a Louisiana governmental affairs firm addressing issues affecting communities across the state. Her extensive experience includes capital projects and planning, tax and finance, education, criminal justice, tourism and hospitality, economic development, healthcare, and governmental affairs. Throughout her career, she has successfully worked on constitutional amendments, municipal campaigns, large-scale procurements, and a wide range of legislation.

PRESENTERS, SPEAKERS & MODERATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES



Raymond Sexton serves as the Executive Director of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission, serving the citizens of Fayette County as the leader of the city's civil rights enforcement agency. As the Executive Director, Raymond is responsible for oversight of the Commission's operation, the supervision and training of staff, establishing and monitoring of the agency's budget, conducting workshops on discrimination issues, supervising of the case management system and liaison with federal agencies regarding contract compliance. Raymond began his employment with the Commission in 1997 as Investigator and has served as Executive Director since December of 2009.

Throughout his many years of experience in civil rights enforcement, Raymond has received extensive training in the field of discrimination regarding fair housing enforcement and complaint investigations. Raymond is a 2007 graduate of the National Fair Housing Training Academy in Washington, DC. Raymond often serves as presenter on the topic of civil rights and has served as a guest lecturer for several elementary and high schools in central Kentucky, Georgetown College and the University of Kentucky College of Law. In addition, Raymond has appeared on several local, state and national media outlets on a variety of topics pertaining to civil rights enforcement.



Manire Vaughn (MV) serves as the Director of the Complaint Investigations Division for the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights. As Director, MV leads the team responsible for investigating all alleged acts of discrimination that occur within Minneapolis. Prior to joining the city, MV served as Senior Associate General Counsel at Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. Within this role, MV supported the agency on a broad range of legal matters including, federal compliance, fair housing, affordable housing financing, grants, and supportive housing initiatives. MV values centering community voices and is dedicated to using his legal expertise to protect those most vulnerable to systems of oppression. Beyond traditional legal practice, MV has worked nationally to strengthen

protections for those living in affordable housing, and to advance sound public policy that prioritizes the health and well-being of those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. MV is also an adjunct professor at University of St. Thomas College of Law.

MV earned his Juris Doctorate at Michigan State University College of Law and was the 2023 recipient of the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Social Justice Award.

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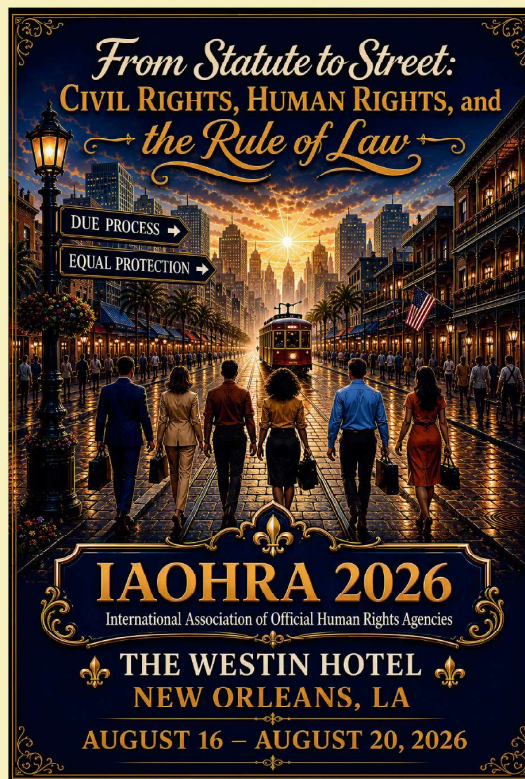


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- ✓ **Public Accommodation.** Places open to the public like stores, restaurants, hotels, theaters, and hospitals.
- ✓ **Education.** Enrollment, classroom access, school activities, accommodations.
- ✓ **Housing.** Renting, buying, applying or living in a home or apartment.

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- Sex
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- Age
- Equal Pay Act

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File an online inquiry to begin the complaint process. Scan the QR Code to get started.



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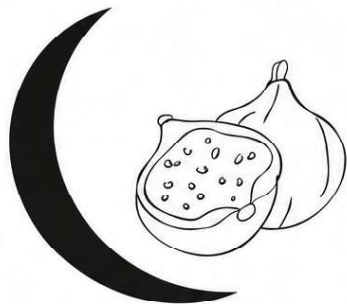


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Emergency Medicine Physician | Consultant
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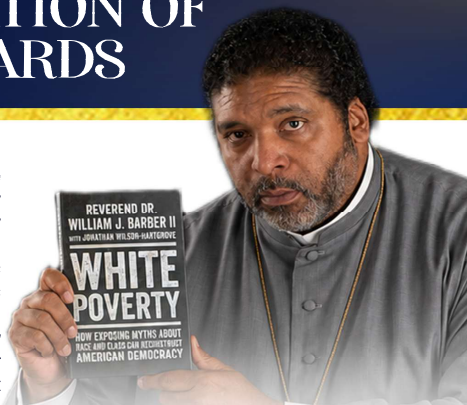
Mailing Address



SPECIAL INVITATION

2026 ANNUAL DINNER AND MAYOR'S CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS

The **Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II** is a nationally recognized faith leader, public theologian, author, and social justice advocate. He serves as President and Senior Lecturer of Repairers of the Breach, Co-Chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, and Professor in the Practice of Public Theology and Public Policy and Founding Director of the Center for Public Theology and Public Policy at Yale Divinity School. A leading voice for economic justice, voting rights, and moral public policy, Rev. Barber gained national prominence through the Moral Mondays movement in North Carolina and has spent decades organizing communities to address poverty, systemic racism, and inequality. He previously served as President of the North Carolina NAACP and as a member of the National NAACP Board of Directors. Rev. Barber is the author of several influential books, including his most recent, *White Poverty: How Exposing Myths About Race and Class Can Reconstruct American Democracy*. He is a recipient of the MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, the North Carolina Award, the state's highest civilian honor, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Award, and numerous honorary doctorates. He earned a bachelor's degree from North Carolina Central University, a Master of Divinity from Duke University, and a doctorate from Drew University with a concentration in Public Policy and Pastoral Care. Widely regarded as one of the nation's most influential moral leaders, Rev. Barber continues to inspire audiences across the country through his advocacy, scholarship, and commitment to justice.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II
FAITH LEADER • AUTHOR • HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2026 | 6:30 PM



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BREAKOUT SESSION EVALUATION

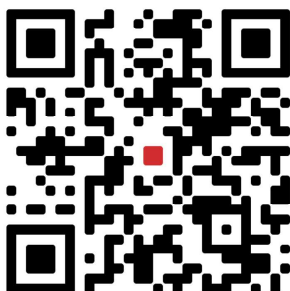


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PLENARY SPEAKER SESSION EVALUATION



SCAN TO EVALUATE



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#HumanRights #RuleOfLaw #HumanRightsLeadership
#CivilRightsLeadership #NewOrleans2026

MINNESOTA NEIGHBORS: NOT IN OUR TOWN NEW FILM

Submitted by patriceo (/users/patriceo) on May 20, 2026 - 1:48pm



Minnesota Neighbors: Not In Our Town New Film

Not In Our Town is now in production with *Minnesota Neighbors*, a new film profiling the brave actions of Minnesota residents during ICE's Operation Metro Surge. Learn more and support the film.

As ICE operations spread fear and danger in the Twin Cities, Minnesotans show the power of kindness, courage and community-wide peaceful actions as they unite with immigrant neighbors. Their stories provide hope, inspiration and guidance for communities everywhere.

Your support is urgently needed to complete this film. Donate here (<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/the-working-group-not-in-our-town/minnesota-neighbors-film-project>).

Story and Context: Millions of people watched the escalating level of racial profiling and violence in Minnesota this winter with the brutal execution of ICE's Operation Metro Surge. In the aftermath of two killings of U.S. citizens by federal agents, tens of thousands of Minnesotans used their voices, presence and know-how to stand in compassion with those who were harmed, and affirm their commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

NIOT's film Minnesota Neighbors captures the beauty and strength of unity displayed by residents from every walk of life, ethnic background, and religion who stepped into harsh winter streets at all hours to support their neighbors. The lessons from these moments are portrayed in the film by a chorus of characters who show what is at stake and also what is possible when a community unites for mutual aid. Portraits in the film include immigrants bravely speaking up, clergy, journalists, teachers, local officials, doctors, restaurateurs, unions, business owners, and families who overcame their own fears to stand up—for each other and for our freedoms as Americans.

Showing the power of ordinary people: *Most remarkably, this massive force of “neighboring” led to the current end of ICE’s brutal tactics and mass detentions in the region. The stories provide guidance, hope and inspiration for communities everywhere facing evolving threats in the coming years.*

NIOT's goal is to complete a short documentary by Fall 2026. In the meantime, we are cutting short clips that can be distributed on multiple platforms. Because of NIOT's ongoing partnerships and relationships in schools and communities across the U.S., the film will be used in civic spaces and schools for years to come as an example of the power each person has to protect and defend their neighbors and community.

DONATE TO THIS NONPROFIT WORK HERE, AND SHARE THE DONATE PAGE

([HTTPS://SECURE.GIVELIVELY.ORG/DONATE/THE-WORKING-GROUP-NOT-IN-OUR-](https://secure.givelively.org/donate/the-working-group-not-in-our-town/minnesota-neighbors-film-project)

[TOWN/MINNESOTA-NEIGHBORS-FILM-PROJECT](https://secure.givelively.org/donate/the-working-group-not-in-our-town/minnesota-neighbors-film-project)) WITH FRIENDS AND FELLOW COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

RESERVE SPACE AND SCHEDULE FALL SCREENINGS IN LOCAL THEATERS

Will your community share and screen the story of Minnesota Neighbors in the Fall? NIOT plans to release the film for community events in October 2026. If your community can host an event in a local theater starting October 18, please send us a message. Info@theworkinggroup.org (mailto:Info@theworkinggroup.org)
Subject Line: MN Neighbors Fall Screening Sign Up

Please be in touch if you have connections or ideas for funders.

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Home Report Hate News Resources
About



WORLD CUP HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

LA vs Hate and LA County's Human Relations Commission (HRC) have partnered with the Los Angeles World Cup 2026 Host Committee and 211LA to launch a Human Rights Campaign that promotes and expands reporting, resources, and outreach to support residents, workers, visitors, and vulnerable communities during the World Cup.

With expectations for a large increase in tourism and economic activity across LA County, this partnership **will help ensure that everyone across LA County has access to support services related to human rights-related concerns, including hate incidents, discrimination, workers' rights violations, immigrants' rights concerns, and human trafficking.** This initiative's goal is to help build awareness of civil and human rights protections for all, while creating access to support and resources before, during, and immediately following the tournament.

211 LA will serve as a multilingual, 24/7 confidential reporting and referral resource for residents, workers, visitors, and community members seeking support related to all human rights concerns.

This summer, we are committed to celebrating our diverse cultures and traditions and spreading the message of unity — despite what team you're rooting for. Individuals can access services by dialing 2-1-1 or visiting www.211la.org/humanrights.



[Home](#) [Report Hate](#) [News](#)



WORLD CUP HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

[Home](#) [Report Hate](#) [News](#)[Watch on](#)

We teamed up with Los Angeles Football Club Players David Martinez and Nkosi Tafari to promote unity and encourage fans to celebrate diversity, show respect for one another, and help create welcoming communities throughout LA County.

[Learn More](#)

LA vs Hate is popping up at select fan zones, festivals, and watch parties across the County to ensure residents know about the Human Rights Protections and support available to them during the World Cup and beyond. We will be at the below events:

- June 18: Victory Cup Watch Party: Grand Hope Park, 919 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90015
- June 21: Kick It In The Park FIFA Watch Party: Echo Park Lake, 751 Echo Park Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90026
- June 24: Mayberry Park Watch Party: 13201 East Meyer Rd., Whittier, CA 90605
- June 26: Community Watch Party: El Cariso Park
13100 Hubbard St, Sylmar, CA 91342
- June 27-28: WeHo World Cup Fan Zone: 647 N San Vicente Blvd, West Hollywood



Home Report Hate News

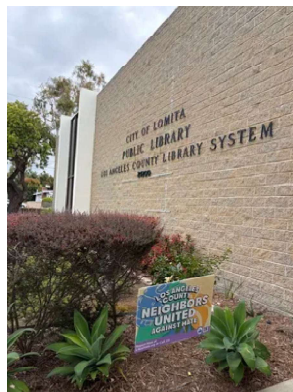
- July 10-11: Park to Park Street Festival: MacArthur Park to Lafayette Park (Westlake)

TAKE ACTION



Post on social media with one easy click using our partner toolkit, featuring graphics and pre-made captions, to spread the message of unity and celebrate cultural diversity.

Post On Social Media





L.A. vs Hate



<https://abc7.com/jewish-men-shot-federal.../12831891/>



1

2

 Like

 Comment

Most relevant ▼



Irvine HateCrime
James Mai Hate Crime



3y

Most relevant is selected, so some comments may have been filtered out.



L.A. vs Hate

May 19 · 🌐



Our hearts mourn with the families and communities who were impacted by the horrifying and hateful shooting at the Islamic Center of San Diego. Muslim people are valued members of our communities, and we condemn all acts of hate targeting anyone in LA County.

The most recent 2024 LA County Hate Crime Report indicated that hate crimes targeting Muslims in LA County are the highest we've ever seen. We stand in solidarity with our Islamic community and urge everyone in LA County to come together to stop Islamophobia, racism, and hate.

Every person has the right to gather with others of their faith, free from being targeted by hate or discrimination. If you or someone you know is seeking support, call 211 or visit LAvsHate.org for help. See [less](#)

Log in or sign up for Facebook to connect with friends, family and people you know.

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or

Create new account



L.A. vs Hate

August 28 at 5:34 PM · 🌐



LA vs Hate stands with the Armenian community and we condemn the recent hate incidents in which anti-Armenian flyers were distributed near Glenoaks Elementary School in Glendale. We believe residents from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds should feel welcomed, respected, and safe in LA County. Instances such as these remind us of the importance of working together to create peaceful and inclusive communities.



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Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
510 S. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020
info@hrc.lacounty.gov
(213) 738-2788

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

August 25, 2026 | 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

[Via Microsoft Teams](#)

or Call In at +1 (213) 204-2512

Phone Conference ID: 831 349 137#

Committee Chair: Commissioner Gay Yuen | **Vice Chair:** Ilan Davidson

Committee Members: Helen Chin, Jeanette Ellis-Royston, Serena Oberstein,
Fredrick Sykes

Staff: Robin Toma, Robert Sowell, Pierre Arreola, Joshua Parr, Paul Smith

AGENDA

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement | (2:00) |
| 2. Review & Approval of Minutes (June 30, 2026) | (2:02) |
| 3. Discussion: Election Disruption Prevention and Response Project Update | (2:05) |
| 4. Discussion: FWC26 Human Rights Implementation Framework Update | (2:35) |
| 5. Discussion: Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team Update | (3:05) |
| 6. Public Comment | (3:20) |
| 7. Commissioner & Staff Announcements | (3:25) |
| 8. Adjournment | (3:30) |

Next Meeting Date – September 29, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by virtual conference communication from the following locations: Gay Yuen (517 S. Orange Ave., Apt. E, Monterey Park, 91755); Helen Chin (5844 Bowcroft St., Unit #4, Los Angeles CA 90016); Ilan Davidson (1435 W. 7th St., San Pedro, CA 90732); Jeanette Ellis-Royston (1460 E. Holt Ave., Rm. 6, Pomona, CA 91767); Serena Oberstein (17509 Romar St., Northridge, CA 91325); Fredrick Sykes (3537 Samantha Ave., West Covina, CA 91792). An asterisk () denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item. Meetings are held in English and accessible to persons with disabilities. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission on Human Relations at (213) 738-7288 or info@hrc.lacounty.gov at least 3 business days before the meeting.*



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 S. Vermont Avenue, 15th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90020
www.hrc.lacounty.gov
213.738.2788

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE **MEETING MINUTES**

June 30, 2026 | 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conference

PRESENT: Gay Yuen
Ilan Davidson
Jeanette Ellis-Royston
Fredrick Sykes
Serena Zeise-Oberstein
Helen Chin

ABSENT: Ilan Davidson

STAFF: Robin Toma
Robert Sowell
Pierre Arreola
Paul Smith
Joshua Parr

I. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgment

Chair Gay Yuen called the meeting to order at 2:26 PM with a quorum in attendance. The County of Los Angeles land acknowledgement was then read.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chair Gay Yuen invited a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Helen Chin moved to approve the minutes of the Human Rights Committee meeting on April 28, 2026, as presented by staff. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

Moved: Chin

Seconded: Sykes

Ayes: Yuen, Sykes, Zeise-Oberstein

Nays: None

Abstentions: Chin

Vote: 3 – 0 – 1

The motion was adopted.

III. Election Disruption Prevention and Response Project Update

Staff Pierre Arreola provided an update on the deployment of the June 2026 election and the ongoing development of the Election Disruption Prevention and Response Project. The staff reviewed the Board motion from March 2026 related to preparations for potential election disruptions, as well as subsequent reports from the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk identifying the Election Resource Liaison (ERL) program as a critical component of the County's election-protection strategy. Staff also noted that conflict-resolution and de-escalation content had been integrated into training programs for election workers, troubleshooters, coordinators, and vote center leaders beyond the ERL cohort.

Staff Pierre Arreola shared that concerns raised during ERL training about possible detention by federal immigration authorities sparked important conversations with the Registrar-Recorder leadership, County Counsel, and the Board of Supervisors. These discussions led to a County effort to provide legal support for election workers involved in anti-disruption activities, including ERLs. Staff described this as a historic and pioneering commitment by the local government to safeguard election workers. It's also worth noting that LA Public Press reported on the ERL program.

A total of 42 ERLs completed the four-day June deployment, slightly fewer than the initial goal of 50 participants, as some had to withdraw for various reasons. In certain areas, ERLs worked solo teaming up with troubleshooters or coordinators when it wasn't feasible to maintain two-person teams. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes inquired about the staffing plans for the upcoming November election. Staff explained that their estimates ranged from about 60 to 75 ERLs, taking into account regional needs, available funding, and recommendations from the post-election review.

Staff also shared that stipends for ERLs are in process, and a listening session is scheduled for July 8, 2026. Staff are organizing an online survey and an informal in-person wellness gathering to gather feedback from participants, foster stronger relationships within the group, and provide trauma-informed support after the demanding deployment. The insights gained will help shape a report with recommendations on recruitment, training, deployment, and regional coverage for the November 2026 election.

IV. FWC26 Human Rights Implementation Framework Update

Staff Pierre Arreola reported that the Los Angeles County World Cup Human Rights Campaign and Reporting Line launched on June 1, 2026, in partnership with 211 LA, LA vs. Hate, TaskForce, and community AAPI Equity Alliance. The framework consists of three components: public messaging and education, a 24-hour multilingual human rights reporting and care-coordination line built on the 211 system, and human-rights-focused initiatives implemented in coordination with the LA World Cup Host Committee.

A. Human Rights Campaign and Reporting Line

Staff reviewed nine principal focus areas: workers' rights; human trafficking; hate and discrimination; immigrants' rights; accessibility for persons with disabilities, persons with

limited mobility, and persons with limited English proficiency; fair treatment of unhoused individuals; environmental impacts; freedom of assembly, opinion, expression, and the press; and public and personal safety. Staff emphasized that reports falling outside these categories would not be excluded. A dedicated human rights reporting landing page and online reporting form were developed to collect relevant information, identify patterns, connect callers with remedies, and support care coordination.

English- and Spanish-language public service announcements were released, and the campaign received statements of support from all five members of the Board of Supervisors. Staff reported television coverage through Telemundo and KTLA, along with coverage by several local publications. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes noted that the San Gabriel Valley Tribune had published an article regarding the County's free human rights assistance during the World Cup.

B. Stadium Incidents, Free Expression, and Mitigation

Staff discussed reports arising from matches involving Iran at LA Stadium, including alleged harassment, assault, discrimination, restrictions involving flags and political expression, and concerns affecting persons perceived to be Muslim, persons wearing hijabs, and persons displaying Palestinian or Iranian flags. Staff explained that reports had been received through both the 211 human rights reporting line and FIFA's grievance mechanism and that the Commission team had communicated with FIFA, the Host Committee, stadium representatives, local jurisdictions, and community organizations to identify mitigation strategies for subsequent matches.

Commissioner Serena Zeise-Oberstein asked whether the Commission's position supported an individual's right to display a national flag. Staff affirmed the Commission's commitment to freedom of expression while distinguishing that principle from the rules that a private event operator may enforce inside a private venue. Staff stated that the Commission would continue to advocate for rights-conscious and non-punitive responses to political and religious expression and to harms that may continue to be reported after the matches conclude.

C. Continuing Implementation and Legacy Planning

Staff reported that the human rights reporting line would continue through the end of the tournament and for several months afterward until October 31, 2026 to accommodate delayed reports and ongoing care coordination. Information gathered during the planning and tournament periods will be compiled into a lessons-learned report intended to inform future major-event strategies, including the Super Bowl and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Chair Gay Yuen noted that a joint World Cup celebration hosted by El Pueblo Historical Monument and Union Station drew thousands of participants and occurred without significant incidents. Staff also reported that human-rights campaign signage had been displayed around the LA Stadium venue footprint and that the locally produced land

acknowledgement video had been approved for presentation at every World Cup match held at LA Stadium.

V. Human Rights Monitoring & Advocacy Team Update

Staff Joshua Parr reported on the Human Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Team's participation in a California Civil Rights Department peacemakers gathering in downtown Los Angeles. The team designed and facilitated a workshop titled "Conflict Without Borders," bringing together 16 practitioners from across California working in human relations, mediation, community protection, hate prevention, and conflict resolution. The session examined how California can better prepare for emerging community conflicts, including the local effects of international conflicts on diaspora communities, election-related conflict prevention, and human rights planning for major events.

The workshop used brief presentations followed by facilitated breakout scenarios. Participants considered what communities need before, during, and after periods of conflict. The strongest theme was that community resilience depends on relationships, communication systems, trusted messengers, interfaith and intercultural partnerships, and mediation capacity established before a crisis occurs rather than created only in reaction to one. Participants also emphasized that meaningful civic participation depends on competence, credibility, care, and public trust.

Staff Paul Smith reported that organizer Angela Oh provided strong feedback and that participants praised the session's relevance and impact. Staff Pierre Arreola thanked Staff Joshua Parr and Staff Paul Smith and noted discussions with the California Association of Human Relations Organizations to sustain statewide conflict-resolution infrastructure amid possible State budget limitations. Additional convenings were anticipated in Silicon Valley in August and Fresno in December, including a focus on artificial intelligence and conflict resolution.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

VII. Commissioner & Staff Announcements

Assistant Executive Director Robert Sowell clarified that the Committee's current remote-meeting practice may continue under the Brown Act, provided remote participants notify staff, list the remote address on the agenda, and post the agenda for public access at that location.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Gay Yuen invited a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fredrick Sykes moved to adjourn. Commissioner Serena Zeise-Oberstein seconded the motion, and the vote proceeded as follows:

Moved: Sykes

Seconded: Zeise-Oberstein

Ayes: Yuen, Chin, Ellis-Royston, Sykes, Zeise-Oberstein

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0

The motion was adopted unanimously. Seeing no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:18 PM.

Next Meeting Date: July 28, 2026, at 2:00 PM

For Agenda Item 7.1: Commission Committees for FY 2026-27 (reflects

feedback at August 2026 Commission meeting)

Comm. To vote on committees and members;- Pres. Davidson to designate chairs of committees

AWARDS EVENT COMMITTEE	POLICY AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE	LA VS. HATE COMMITTEE	AD HOC STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE	HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
Ilan Davidson, Chair	Helen Chin **	Jason Moss, Chair	Preeti Kulkarni, Chair	Gay Yuen, Chair
Kevorc Keushkerian	Jeanette Ellis Royston	Ilan Davidson	Derric Johnson	Helen Chin
	Jason Moss	Jeanette Ellis Royston	Jason Moss	Ilan Davidson
Fredrick Sykes	Serena Oberstein not present to assent	Michael GiHao Cheung	Fredrick Sykes	Jeanette Ellis Royston
Gay Q. Yuen				Preeti Kulkarni
				Serena Oberstein Id.
				Fredrick Sykes
Commission Staff: April Johnson Robert Sowell	Staff: Robert Sowell Robin Toma	Staff: Devsy Donis-Santos Robin Toma	Staff: Robert Sowell Robin Toma	Staff: Pierre Arreola Robert Sowell Robin Toma

(*) Our Commission Bylaws (Article IX) require that each year, our Commission ratify the committees and its members. (**) The Commission President is an ex-officio member of all committees, according to the Commission Bylaws.



UNITED AGAINST HATE WEEK

United Against Hate Week will occur this year from **Sunday, October 18th - Saturday, October 24th**. During this week, communities are planning webinars, social media events, screenings, art projects, community dialogues, and meditation gatherings. These concrete actions will provide a dynamic way to increase engagement across neighborhoods and support efforts to stand up to hate in our communities.

United Against Hate Week is open to all participants and we encourage you to be involved in any way that you can. If you or your organization is interested in participating please fill out the form below or reach out via email to info@lavshate.org

Learn more about the movement on United Against Hate's [website](#).



[Home](#)[Report Hate](#)[News](#)[Resources](#)[About](#)

Election years often see an increase in divisive rhetoric that can lead to community tension and even violence. Therefore, **this fall, our creative campaign ‘Stop Hate. Vote’ reminds LA County residents to practice civility and mutual respect.** This is a non-partisan campaign focused on elevating the importance of civic engagement as a tool to address hate. Your vote matters! *LA vs Hate does not endorse any specific candidates or ballot measures.*

STOP HATE. VOTE.

[Register to Vote](#)[Election Information](#)[Language Access](#)

Gloria Steinem, trailblazing journalist and activist, dies at 92

Excerpted from NRP

Gloria Steinem, a trailblazing journalist and activist who devoted her life to fighting for women's rights, died on Wednesday. She was 92. Her passing was announced in a statement posted on her Instagram. It did not give a cause of death. "Gloria Steinem passed away peacefully at her home in New York City, surrounded by some of the many who loved her," the post read.

Starting in the 1960s, at a time when women were largely limited to domestic roles, Steinem challenged gender stereotypes and championed feminist ideals like equality, sisterhood and reproductive freedom. In doing so, she inspired generations of women to do the same. Today, she's a household name that is synonymous with the women's rights movement.

"Because of her work, across America and around the world, more women are afforded the respect and opportunities that they deserve," then-President Barack Obama said when he awarded Steinem the Presidential Medal of Freedom for her commitment to activism in 2013. "She also changed how women thought about themselves."

Steinem was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1934. She graduated from Smith College in 1956 with a bachelor's degree in government studies. After Steinem finished school, she spent two years in India on a fellowship, an experience that she said shaped her activism in the U.S.

Steinem went on to serve as a founding editor and writer at *New York* magazine and, a few years later, in 1972, launched her own publication, *Ms. magazine*, which was named after the honorific title that doesn't define a woman by her marital status. It was widely regarded as the first national magazine run by and written for women.

Beyond journalism, Steinem was an activist and political organizer. In 1971, Steinem helped form the National Women's Political Caucus, which focuses on recruiting, training and endorsing more women in politics.

Among the legislative issues that mattered most to Steinem was reproductive freedom — driven by her own experience of having had an illegal abortion at age 22.

In 2022, a few weeks before the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, ending the constitutional right to abortion, Steinem told NRP that even if the decision were reversed, she did not think her and others' work on reproductive justice was in vain.

Peter Cullen, Voice of Eeyore in ‘Winnie the Pooh’, Dies at 85

Excerpted from The Hollywood Reporter

Peter Cullen, the Canadian voice actor who starred as the heroic Optimus Prime in a convoy of Transformers films, TV shows and video games and as the gloomy Eeyore in dozens of Winnie the Pooh projects, has died. He was 85.

Cullen died Wednesday at his home in Los Angeles, his agent, Kevin Motley, told The Hollywood Reporter.

He “passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loving family — and held in the hearts of his many friends and countless fans worldwide,” his family said in a statement. They ask “that you honor his remarkable legacy by serving your communities and leading others with compassion, integrity and loyalty and always remember ‘be strong enough to be gentle.’”

Dolly Parton, queen of country music and humanitarian hero, dead at 80

Excerpted from MSN

Dolly Parton, who rose from humble beginnings to the greatest heights of American music and became one of the country's most philanthropic, unifying and beloved stars, died Tuesday in Nashville, according to a family statement. She was 80. The statement said Parton died "peacefully." Her publicist Marcel Pariseau later said that she died "after bravely facing a brief battle with cancer." A small, private service will be held for her close family.

In a career that spanned over half a century, Parton captured the American experience, penning more than 3,000 songs.

Parton went on to release 49 albums and win 11 Grammys, and became one of the most successful country crossover artists of all time, scoring regular hits on the pop charts.

As her success in music and business grew, so did Parton's humanitarian efforts. Two years after the opening of Dollywood, Parton launched the Dollywood Foundation, which initially sought to lower the high school dropout rate in her home county in Tennessee. After expanding to include the Buddy Program, in which Parton personally pledged to give \$500 to every 7th-grade and 8th-grade student if they graduated from high school, she formed the Imagination Library, which has grown into one of the premier early literacy efforts and book-gifting programs in the world. It all linked back to her father, to whom she said the library was in tribute.

In addition to multiple scholarship donations and programs, Parton also mobilized over the years after natural disasters affected both her home state and surrounding areas.

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, she personally stepped in to help fund the development of the Moderna vaccine and donated \$1 million to coronavirus research at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.