

**CHICAGO COMMISSION  
ON HUMAN RELATIONS**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
1980**



Mayor Jane M. Byrne



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

JANE M. BYRNE  
MAYOR

January 23, 1981

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Commissioners, officers and staff of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations for their unswerving devotion to the program for equal opportunities for all the citizens of Chicago.

The task of the Commission is arduous, especially in these trying times when emotions run high as a result of the pressures from high inflation, high unemployment, dwindling rental housing and a sagging economy.

I am sure you will have the cooperation of the good citizens of Chicago in your efforts to make 1981 and the years ahead more harmonious and productive for all citizens of Chicago.

Sincerely,

Mayor



City of Chicago  
Jane M. Byrne, Mayor

Commission on  
Human Relations  
Peter Fitzpatrick  
Chairman  
Rachel A. Nadley  
Director

640 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60610  
(312)744-4111

To The Honorable Jane M. Byrne, Mayor  
and the Members of the City Council  
City Hall  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

The goal of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations is the reality of equal opportunity for all residents. The Commission believes nothing is more basic to an open society than equal opportunity to participate, for to deprive anyone of such opportunity is to deny his dignity as a person.

The realization of equal opportunity for all Chicagoans would make unnecessary other Commission programs. To achieve this goal the Commission asks all residents of Chicago and City administrators in particular to renew their commitment to continuing action. With the support of the Mayor and the City Council the Commission will strive to bring closer the day when basic democratic values will prevail in Chicago.

To those citizens who supported us in 1980 and to those citizens who will commit themselves to our purpose in 1981 we dedicate our 1980 annual report.

Sincerely,

  
Peter Fitzpatrick  
Chairman

Chairman Peter Fitzpatrick



# SUMMARY

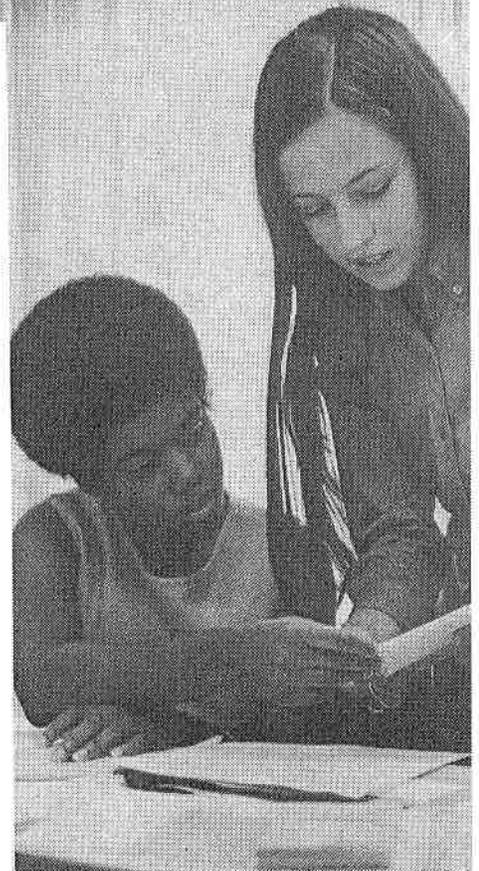
The Chicago Commission on Human Relations provides a wide range of services to citizens alleging discrimination in the City of Chicago. Upon receiving a complaint, Commission staff investigates the situation thoroughly, contacting all parties involved in the matter.

The Commission's role is conciliatory in nature, seeking satisfactory solutions to discriminatory practices brought to its attention and attempting to uphold complainants' rights.

During the first 10 months of 1980 the Chicago Commission on Human Relations handled a total of 1,242 complaints alleging racial discrimination in a number of categories.

The table below is a breakdown of total complaints received.

COMPLAINTS	
Category	Ten-month total
EMPLOYMENT .....	621
MISCELLANEOUS .....	214
HOUSING .....	120
RACIAL TENSION .....	85
FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY .....	79
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION .....	57
EDUCATION .....	42
HEALTH .....	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,242</b>



# Communication Workshop Series



## *City Wide Workshop*

More than 400 Chicago residents and neighborhood leaders met in September to exchange information and discuss community issues at the First Annual City-Wide Human Relations Workshop, sponsored by the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. The workshop represented the final program in a series of 30 neighborhood communications programs conducted by the Commission between April and September during 1980.

Human Relations Commissioner Barbara Fiske, assisted by Commission Chairman Peter Fitzpatrick, hosted the human relations forum, which was held September 27 at William Jones Commercial High School. The all-day conference was designed to develop more effective lines of communication and to promote greater understanding among Chicago residents.

Through a recently renewed Community Development grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Commission is continuing its workshop series for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1980.

During the city-wide conference, participants dispersed into eight workshops to discuss the promotion of human relations in fields ranging from employment and education to police-community relations. Discussion leaders also were chosen to cover a wide variety of topics related to community and family life. Included among the discussion leaders were Deputy Superintendent Ira Harris of the Chicago Police Department's Bureau of Community Services, Dr. Pamela Rebeck of the Chicago Stress Center, Dr. Jean

Lightfoot, curriculum coordinator with the City Colleges of Chicago, and Professor Grace Holt, director of the Department of Black Studies at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus.

Other discussion leaders included Sandra Little, an attorney with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Gwendolyn Anderson of the Chicago Urban League, Joseph Battaglia of the Chicago Department of Housing, and Carlos Gonzalez and Arturo Jauregui from the Legal Assistance Foundation.

Commission Director Rachel R. Ridley expressed enthusiasm over the outcome of the first city-wide conference. "The program succeeded in strengthening channels of communication and understanding among participants," Director Ridley said. "Our staff is looking forward to next year's city-wide conference, which will be the culmination of our current series of workshops that began in October."

## *Neighborhood Workshop*

As part of its expanded neighborhood outreach effort, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations currently is conducting a series of 41 communications workshops to promote greater understanding of the rich and diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds of Chicago's residents.

The workshops, which are being held in 20 target neigh-

borhoods throughout the city, are funded through a Community Development (CD) grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Recently, this grant was renewed for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1980. Response to the workshop series has been consistently favorable since the CD program was initiated in April 1980.

During each workshop program, emphasis is placed on promoting social interaction and strengthening lines of communication among participants. By helping individuals to understand why they feel hostility or fear towards other groups of people, the Commission strives to create a climate of good will and respect among persons of different racial and cultural backgrounds.

The Commission's ultimate goals in its workshop series are to enhance human relations in Chicago and to establish a better understanding of the needs and concerns of all Chicago residents — before incidents and confrontations can occur.

With the arrival of many Latino immigrants, as well as those from Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, workshop sessions also focus on helping acquaint new residents with Chicago.

One additional purpose of the current series is to educate residents throughout Chicago on issues concerning their civil rights. During each program, participants who suspect their rights are being violated are urged to file discrimination complaints with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations or, in some cases, another government agency. One direct outcome of the workshop series has been an increase in the number of discrimination complaints the Commission has received during 1980.

Each of the communications workshops is conducted in a neighborhood presently receiving CD Block Grant funding. Examples of past workshop sites include the Trina Davila Community Service Center on the Near Northwest Side, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in South Shore, the Salvation Army Freedom Center on the Near West Side, the Japanese American Senior Citizen Center in Lakeview and the American Indian Center in Uptown.

Prior to conducting each conference, Commission staff



*Complainants discuss their problems with trained investigators on the commission staff.*

members discuss with community leaders the problems and issues confronting the neighborhood. Subsequently, the Commission organizes a group of speaker-panelists to discuss with workshop participants the services and resources available in their vicinity. Thus, the agenda for each workshop varies from neighborhood to neighborhood.

An illustration of this diversity can be seen by focusing on the differences between the Commission's September 7 workshop in the Austin community on the Far West Side, and its May 30 program in Englewood, on the South Side.

In Austin, the issue of "regentrification" is on the minds of many residents. With the recent influx of white families into the area's largely minority population, many Austinites — both black and white — are concerned that the neighborhood's current residents will be driven out or "displaced" by the ongoing rehabilitation and renovation of homes in the area.

In comparison, the issues of relocation and renovation are not of as vital concern to residents of the Englewood community.

Consequently, when the Commission conducted its workshop in Austin, which was held at the Third Unitarian Church, located at 301 N. Mayfield, the discussion focused mainly on the prevention of racial disturbances and incidents. Approximately 50 black and white residents attended the program that was co-hosted by Austin People's Action Center. During the workshop, the audience expressed special concern over past racial confrontations that had occurred in Chicago. In particular, participants voiced alarm over the recent rise of activities associated with the Ku Klux Klan or Nazi Party organizations. Another area of interest to the participants revolved around alleged incidents of police brutality involving Austin residents. After viewing a film on the history of racism in the United States, several members of the audience urged the Commission to continue with its communications programs on a larger scale, expanding them to include neighborhoods outside of CD areas.

Overall, participants at the Austin workshop emerged with a broader knowledge and understanding of human relations. In addition to serving as a dialogue for the ex-



*Indonesian students at Truman College learn of the many services offered by the City of Chicago, through the commission's communications workshop series.*

change of remarks and information among audience members, the workshop helped Commission staff members to acquire a deeper understanding of the needs and concerns of Austin residents.

In a similar fashion, the Englewood workshop resulted in expanding and strengthening channels of communication between participants and Commission staff. However, instead of focusing solely on the subject of conflict prevention, the agenda also addressed other important issues.

One subject of special interest to the approximately 45 members of the audience at the Englewood workshop, which was conducted at the John W. Cook School at 8150 S. Bishop, concerned the prospects for finding after-school and summer jobs for children in the area. Another subject of special interest involved adult and post-secondary education. A representative from the Chicago Department of Housing was present during the program to answer questions concerning housing discrimination and landlord-tenant problems, as well as to inform residents of their rights afforded through legislation.

Because of the effectiveness of each of the Commission's workshop programs, rapport between Chicago residents and the Commission has improved and strengthened since the workshop series began in April. During its current workshop series, which began October 1, 1980, the Commission is adhering to its previously established policy of "tailoring" workshop agendas to meet the specific needs and concerns of individual neighborhoods or groups of participants. Audience response to all programs has continued to be very positive and encouraging.

With each of the communications forums involving the active participation of Chicago's residential, neighborhood and business sectors, the Commission is looking forward to strengthening its relations with all members of Chicago's various communities during 1981.



## ***Compliance and Investigation Division***

The Compliance and Investigation Division investigates complaints of discrimination in the areas of public accommodation, health, law and order and financial difficulty, as well as miscellaneous types of complaints.

Chapter 199A of the City Municipal Code states that all persons within the jurisdiction of the City of Chicago shall be entitled to full and equal enjoyment of places of public accommodation. Most of the 57 complaints the Commission has received this year alleging discrimination in this category have originated from denial of entry into bars and taverns. When a complaint is filed, the Commission discusses it thoroughly with the management and employees of the establishment. If further complaints ensue, Commission staff members visit the establishment to ascertain if there is a disparity of treatment. If evidence of discrimination exists, staff members, themselves, initiate complaints and the case is then taken to court.

A second category of cases the Compliance and Investigation Division investigates concerns law and order complaints. Upon learning that members of the Indochinese community in Uptown have become victims of robbery, home invasion and discrimination, Commission Director Rachel R. Ridley called a meeting with Commander John Stibich of the 20th Police District. The following day, Mrs. Ridley informed the Commissioners of the Indochinese situation, focusing on the residents' fear of reporting the incidents to the police. Because of such action, the Commission scheduled a workshop session in November for four different groups of Indochinese students and residents at Truman College, located in Uptown. Thus, a major effort was set forth by the Commission to reach the Indochinese community and to inform the members of their rights and of the various resources available to them.

The Commission also receives numerous complaints from citizens in which the primary element of complaint is financial difficulty. Such cases may entail instances where a complainant's utilities are in the process of being turned off or his or her social security check or food stamps are being stopped. Financial difficulty cases also may involve allegations stemming from belief that credit has been denied because of race or sex. A phone call by the Commission often satisfactorily resolves the problem. In some instances, the complainant is merely referred to the proper agency. As of November 1, 1980, the Commission has investigated 79 complaints involving financial difficulty.

Commission staff members also monitor such anti-racial activities as the Nazi gathering held in Marquette Park and the counter-demonstration conducted by the Communist Workers Party during October 1980. Similarly, Commission staff attended several gatherings in Humboldt Park where there were reported allegations of discriminatory incidents involving the Chicago Police Department and members of the Puerto Rican community. In the past, racial tension had resulted in violent confrontations between police and Puerto Rican residents in or near the park.

During such anti-racial gatherings, staff members act as passive outside observers, collecting the facts of any incidents. Copies of reports are kept in files, so that the Commission is able to keep an active watch on potential racial tension within a community.

Miscellaneous complaints involve cases that do not fall within any other category. These may range from getting a disabled person food because his or her social security check has been reduced, to locating a City representative who will visit a senior citizen in order to help the elderly person fill out a redetermination form for food stamps. More than 15 percent of the total 1,242 complaints the Commission received through October 31, 1980, fell within this category.

## Education Division

The Education Division assists Chicago residents with a variety of education complaints. Since January 1, 1980, the division has investigated 42 complaints. Complainants are usually parents who have children in the Chicago Public School System. However, periodically, the Commission receives complaints involving private institutions, especially at the university level.

Another Commission activity in the area of education is a series of human relations workshops for students at Hubbard High School, located at 6200 S. Hamlin. The workshops, which are jointly sponsored by the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and the Board of Education, have been designed to prevent racial disturbances and to promote improved inter-racial relations at Hubbard High School.

Specifically, the sessions focus on the following objectives:

- To establish some positive communication between new minority and non-minority students at the school.
- To help student participants view each other as human beings and to interact on that basis.
- To identify some of the elements which produce racial tension at Hubbard High School.

The program consists of exercises that are intended to meet the objectives by sharpening communication skills and facilitating the development of leadership qualities. Student response to the program has been very encouraging.



Theodore Wright (standing) Human Relations Coordinator of the Chicago Board of Education, discusses the value of good communications to Hubbard High School students.

## Inter-Agency Committee

The Chicago Commission on Human Relations has continued its Inter-Agency Committee meetings in 1980 for the 12th consecutive year. The meetings are designed to create the sharing of vital information with all concerned departments of government and private industry. The identification of problems and their joint solutions is the main objective of the monthly gatherings. This year, an average of 20 top agency officials from various levels of government met to examine such problems as racial conspiracy in the community of Bridgeport, gang conditions in Douglas

Park, and gang recruitment in the Morgan Park community. A representative from the Chicago Police Department gives a summation of all racial incidents in the city as a regular monthly report.

As an aid to refresh the minds of the participants, packets of news clippings are distributed to each member, highlighting human rights issues throughout the country.

Guests are periodically called to address the Inter-Agency Committee when their presence can shed more insight into a particular problem. Guests this year have included Commander John Nolan of the Ninth Police District and Alderman Clifford Kelley of the 20th Ward. Various members of the Chicago Police Department's Beat Representative Program also have participated at the meetings as resource persons.

## Employment Division

As of November 1, 1980, the Employment Services Division has received 621 complaints alleging discriminatory employment practices. The Commission's role in these matters is predominantly conciliatory. Of the resolved complaints, Commission staff members were able to secure reinstatement of employment, acquire salary increments, improve work conditions and obtain promotions that previously had been denied to employees.

Many situations brought to the Commission's attention do not deal exclusively with the issue of discrimination. On numerous occasions, Commission staff members have assisted persons in securing unemployment benefits. In such instances, staff often has intervened with the Illinois Bureau of Employment Security on the complainant's behalf.

Another type of employment problem in which the Employment Services Division frequently intervenes concerns personality conflicts between co-workers, or workers and supervisors. Acting as a conciliator, the Commission brings these parties together to discuss their differences.

During the year 1980, the Employment Services Division has become involved in the following situations.

- An Hispanic complainant worked for a food processing company for 10 years. Due to poor ventilation in the building, the complainant became ill and stepped out of the premises for five minutes. He subsequently was terminated from his position. The company's management barred the complainant from entering the building, posting his picture outside. Through Commission intervention, the complainant was called into a meeting with a union representative. As a result, the complainant was rehired and the ventilation problem was corrected.
- A female complainant was terminated from a large area hospital for refusing to accept newly-assigned working hours. She was advised of the schedule change three days before it was made official. Company policy stated that workers should be notified one week in advance by conferring with the personnel manager. Through the assistance of the Commission, an acceptable solution to the complainant's working hours was secured.
- A male complainant stated he was receiving bad references from a former immediate supervisor. Staff contacted the personnel manager of the complainant's former place of employment, who recognized the problem. The personnel manager stated that the complainant should give his name as a reference, rather than the supervisor's, in order to no longer jeopardize his effort to find employment.

# Winners of 1980 Awards Presented by the Chicago Commission on Human Relations at its 35th Annual Luncheon Friday, December 12, 1980



## Annual Luncheon

Since its inception as an official city agency, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations has held an annual luncheon to publicize its various programs and services. During the banquet, awards are given to persons who have made outstanding contributions to improving human relations in the City of Chicago. This year, more than 600 persons attended the Commission's 35th Annual Luncheon at the Grand Ballroom of the Palmer House Hotel. Mr. Phillip Mix, administrative assistant to Mayor Jane M. Byrne, was the principle speaker at the December 12 banquet.

## In the Photo

Mrs. Rachel R. Ridley, Director and Chairman Peter Fitzpatrick are pictured with awards winners; Dr. Rosa Subera Burgos, Medical Director, Mary Thompson Hospital, Mother Maria, Cordi Marian Settlement House, Frank Jasch, Police Community Relations Officer, Theodore Wright, Coordinator Human Relations, Board of Education and Samuel Nolan, Director of the Department of Safety.



## Commission on Human Relations

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Mr. Peter Fitzpatrick, Chairman

Mrs. Miriam Apter

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Mr. Morris Bialis

Mrs. Clara Day

Mrs. Barbara Fiske

Mr. Claudio Flores

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Ms. Anita M. Villarreal

Mr. Cleveland Walker

Mr. Henry Wilson

Mrs. Katherine W. Zartman

Mrs. Rachel R. Ridley  
Director

Mr. Donald Colonna  
Assistant to the Director