

April is Fair Housing month and I am excited to bring you information about Fair Housing.

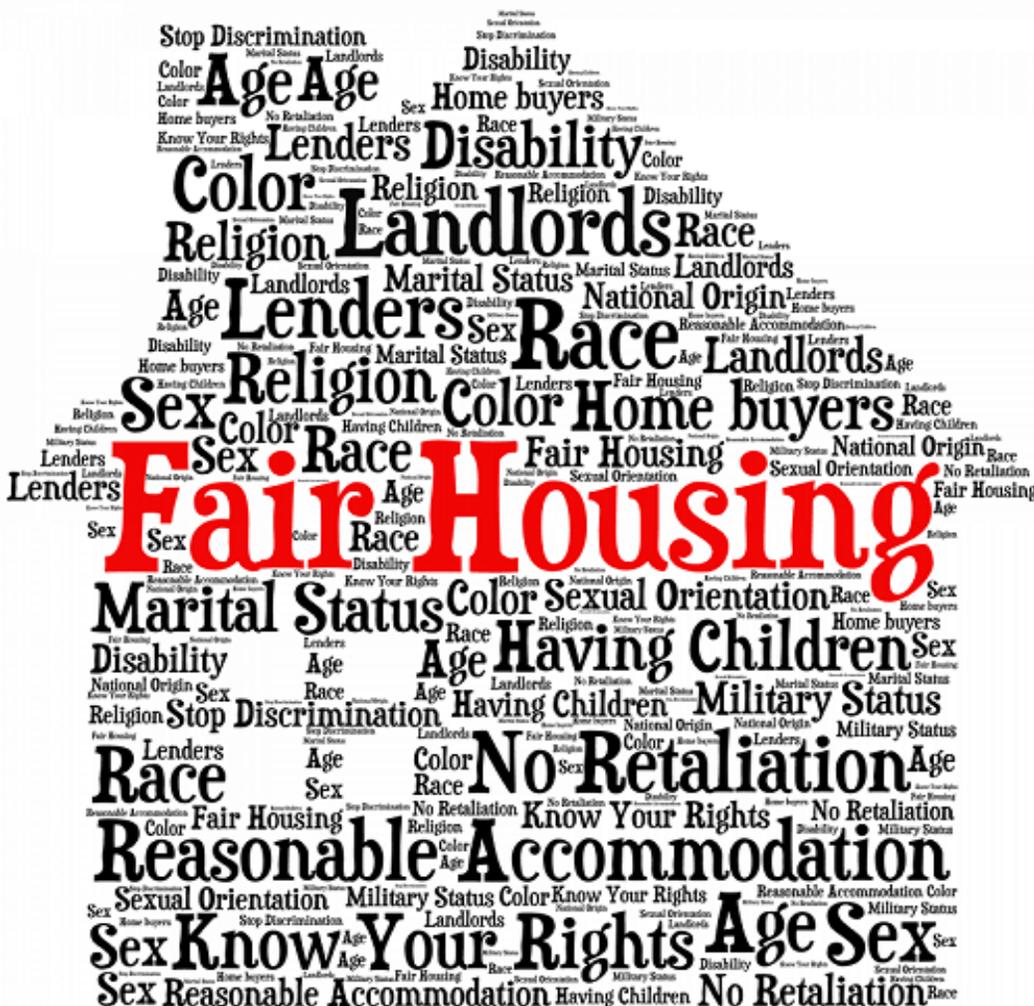
- Karen Richards

“We have come some of the way, not near all of it. There is much yet to do.”

- President Lyndon B. Johnson

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Did you know that the Human Rights Commission provides Fair Housing training for tenants, property management companies and landlords throughout Vermont?

Please contact us if you would like to discuss scheduling a Fair Housing training or have questions about whether this training is right for you or your staff.

**By telephone:
(802) 828-1625**

By email:

Human_rights@vermont.gov



April is Fair Housing month. The goal of the Fair Housing Act, passed forty-eight years ago, within a week of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. was to allow housing opportunities to everyone regardless of their race, skin color or national origin.

Where a person lives determines their quality of life in many important areas such as access to jobs, education, health care, police and fire protection, retailers, loans, insurance, transportation, recreational facilities and recreational activities.

Because so many aspects of life are affected by where a person lives, the Fair Housing Act requires that communities and housing providers receiving federal funding takes steps to “Affirmatively Further Fair Housing” (AFFH). The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is in the process of issuing guidance on how this is accomplished.

“Fair Housing is Not an Option—It Is the Law.” - Carl Harris



Ernest Green

10th Anniversary Fair Housing and Civil Rights Conference ‘Highlights’

On April 7th and 8th the Vermont Human Rights Commission Administrative Law Examiners/ Investigators, Ellen Maxon, Nelson Campbell and Bor Yang, along with Commissioner Dawn Ellis attended the 10th annual Fair Housing and Civil Rights Conference presented by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, HAP Housing, and the Massachusetts Fair Housing Center.

The key note speakers included Ernest Green, one of the Little Rock Seven and Jonathan Kozol, New York Times best selling author.

Ernest Green was the oldest of the nine African American students (the Little Rock Nine) that integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957. Governor Orval Faubus had summoned the Arkansas National Guardsmen to block the students from entering the school in direct defiance of the federal government, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, sent in federal troops to escort the students through the schoolhouse door. Mr. Green is the first African American to graduate from Central High School and served in the Carter administration as Secretary of Labor for Training and Employment. Mr. Green was appointed Chairman of the African Development Foundation by President William J. Clinton and also served as Chairman of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Capital Financing Advisory Board. In 1999, he and the other members of the Little Rock Nine were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Clinton. Mr. Green graduated from Michigan State University with a B.S. in Social Science and a M.S. in Sociology. He has received numerous awards and honors for his work, including the NAACP Spingarn Award, the Rockefeller Public Service Award, and honorary doctorates from Tougaloo College, Michigan State University, and Central State University.

Mr. Green has been instrumental in breaking the color barrier in Southern schools . During this training he offered what he has learned to be the common characteristics needed in change agents:

- 1. When opportunists present themselves, Change Agents ask “why not?”;**
- 2. Recognize that change is constant—stay flexible, laws change through corrective decisions when challenged;**
- 3. Adopt a non-violent approach and sometimes it is better to go around a road block rather than through it. Find an alternative way rather than force it;**
- 4. Do not allow the size of an obstacle to stop them from pursuing change;**
- 5. Know you are not alone. Reach out; you cannot be an agent for change on your own.**

Mr. Green closed with a quote by Nelson Mandela “I walked that long road to freedom after climbing a great hill and discovered many more ... with freedom comes responsibility.”

(continued on next page)



Jonathan Kozol

Jonathan Kozol is a New York Times Bestselling author, educator, and activist, is best known for his books on public education in the United States. Mr. Kozol has devoted nearly his entire life to the challenge of providing equal opportunity to every child in our public schools. *Death at an Early Age*, Kozol's first non-fiction book, which describes his first year as a teacher, received the 1968 National Book Award in Science, Philosophy, and Religion. Among his other major works are *Rachel and Her Children*, a study of homeless mothers and their children, which received the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, and *Savage Inequalities*, which was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1992. His 1995 best-seller, *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*, received the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in 1996, an honor previously granted to the works of Langston Hughes and Dr. Martin Luther King. His recent work, *Fire in the Ashes*, is a redemptive story of children who prevail against all odds,

For decades Mr. Kozol has done extensive research on the inequities children in low income housing, (the majority of whom are minorities), receive beginning as early as the age of three and continuing through high school. The “playing field” is uneven from very early on and it is nearly impossible for a child to catch up when attempting to do so within substandard schools. What is offered by schools in high income or middle income districts versus low income areas is astounding. Everything from the availability of text books, the age of text books, extracurricular activities, safety, student/ teacher ratios, course selection, expectations of graduating and post-graduation education and retention of good teachers are radically effected by the money made available to a school district.

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NEWS

HUD Charges Massachusetts Landlord with Discriminating Against Families with Children. Read the full story [here](#)

HUD Announces Agreement with Fidelity Bank to Resolve Allegations of Unfair Lending Practices. Read the full story [here](#)

Denying Housing Over Criminal Record May be Discrimination Feds Say. Read the full story [here](#)

How Housing Improves Public Safety. Read the full story [here](#)

Racist in Seattle: What the Country Can Learn from the Region's Shifts. Read the full story [here](#)

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont: Housing Discrimination and Fair Housing. Watch the online video [here](#)