

THE EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

ADVANCING CIVIL RIGHTS
FOR OVER A QUARTER CENTURY

THE EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER



The Equal Rights Center (ERC) is a national non-profit civil rights organization dedicating to promoting equal opportunity in housing, employment, public accommodations, and government services through education, research, testing, counseling, advocacy and enforcement.

Collaborating with national and local civil rights organizations, advocacy groups, universities, service providers and the religious community, the ERC advances civil rights practices in the greater Washington D.C. area and across the United States. Today, the ERC stands as one of the few organizations in the United States which engages in comprehensive civil rights enforcement for all protected classes.

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Message from the Board President



Twenty seven years ago, an ecumenical group of Washington area clergy members had a dream of combining their diverse personal backgrounds to develop a fair housing non-profit organization which would complement the legal advocacy of existing organizations. This dream resulted in the successful

organizing of the Fair Housing Council of Greater Washington, predecessor to the Equal Rights Center (ERC).

Since 1983, the ERC has undergone much growth and expansion, with an eye toward respecting and valuing the diverse and personal backgrounds of all those living in the United States.

Looking back on 2009, many significant changes occurred at both the ERC and nationwide. After witnessing several years in which civil rights were not a national priority, 2009 was a banner year for this country. A new White House administration expressed a strong interest and concern for human rights, resulting in the initiation of exciting new directions for a number of governmental institutions, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice.

The ERC's objectives and activities throughout 2009 reflected and recognized these important social and political changes taking place both locally and nationally.

By expanding current programs and beginning many new initiatives, the ERC conducted more than twice as many outreach events, counseled a third more individuals from all across the nation, formed new collaborations while preserving old relationships, led exciting new investigations, and touched many more people through its efforts to

advance civil rights.

What began nearly thirty years ago as a non-profit fair housing organization serving the housing concerns of D.C. metropolitan residents, has developed into a national non-profit organization serving the comprehensive civil rights needs of residents from coast to coast. With fervor for civil rights mounting in the United States, today the ERC has the staff expertise to tackle the diverse range of issues affecting people nationwide and is prepared to ensure that all individuals living in this nation will be treated justly.

While we hope that someday the end of discrimination will put us out of business, the ERC remains committed to advancing civil rights until equal justice and equality for all residents prevails. Until that day arrives, the ERC continues to be driven by a passion for civil rights and a tireless work ethic.

On behalf of the ERC Board of Directors, I would like to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to the phenomenally talented members of the ERC staff who, day in and day out, display an astounding knowledge, ability, and commitment to "fighting the good fight" to end all forms of discrimination affecting the men, women and children of this country. Their ongoing daily devotion and ability makes the ERC the civil rights leader it is today! We applaud their efforts and are exceedingly grateful for their countless contributions to ensure equal justice for all!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Macdonell", written in a cursive style.

**Rev. Dr. James G. Macdonell,
Equal Rights Center Board President**

Message from the Executive Director

I am pleased to report to you that the Equal Rights Center was a powerful, productive and effective force for civil rights in 2009.

Because the best sentinel of civil rights is a well informed public, the ERC continued to expand its education and outreach programs in 2009 by:

- Conducting over 120 educational events;
- Training more than 500 housing industry employees on fair housing;
- Distributing over 20,000 “Know Your Rights” brochures in eight languages; and
- Counseling more than 400 individuals complaining of civil rights violations.

Because the opportunity to live where you want impacts all aspects of a person’s life, the ERC fair housing efforts were at full speed in 2009:

- Conducting 374 housing tests to root out discrimination;
- Earning the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s endorsement of our work through a \$275,000 enforcement grant;
- Securing commitments of apartment developers to remediate more than 13,000 apartments to be made accessible for people with disabilities; and
- Opening more than 7,000 apartment units to Housing Choice Voucher holders.

Because nearly 60 million people in this country have disabilities, in 2009 the ERC continued its long-standing commitment to disability rights by:

- Publishing and distributing 2 disability-related Self Advocacy Toolkits;
- Co-sponsoring a summit of advocates to address the intersection between domestic violence and disability; and

- Securing the commitment of Johnny Rockets to make all of its more than 200 restaurants nationwide accessible for people with disabilities.



In a year of vitriolic debate concerning immigration reform, the ERC remained a vocal advocate for immigrants by:

- Conducting more than a dozen “Know Your Rights” events educating immigrant communities;
- Successfully advocating for continued funding of a Housing Manger and Advocate in Manassas, VA to protect the rights of the Latino residents of that community.

Despite these successes, there is no doubt that the need for action to protect people’s rights remains critical. Through our multifaceted approach of education, research, testing, counseling, enforcement and advocacy, the Equal Rights Center is committed to a leadership role in advancing civil rights—join us as we move ahead.

Sincerely,

Donald L. Kahl,
Equal Rights Center Executive Director

With the inauguration of President Barack Obama, and the changes in leadership at the Department of Justice, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2009 ushered in a resurgence of civil rights advocacy and activism across the country.

Embracing this new and historic opportunity, the Equal Rights Center (ERC) spent 2009 reengaging old alliances, cultivating new collaborations, and implementing new approaches to combat very old problems of discrimination.

With nearly 30 years of civil rights experience, the ERC engages in a multifaceted approach to promote equal opportunity in housing, employment, disability rights, immigrant rights and access to public accommodations and government services. Through innovative thinking and a commitment to making a lasting and national impact, the ERC employs both time-proven and innovative approaches to advancing civil rights. The tools we use

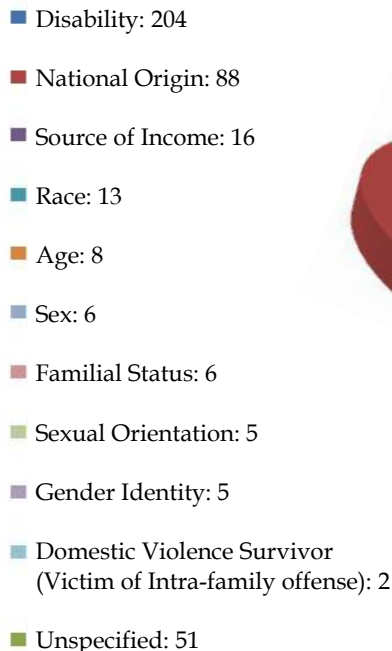
include counseling and advocacy, education and outreach, testing and research, membership, and enforcement.

Counseling and Advocacy

The interviewing (“intake”) and counseling of individuals who have experienced discrimination is pivotal to the work of the ERC. Many times these intakes not only disclose individual incidents of discrimination, but also indicate much more ominous patterns of systemic discrimination. In 2009, **the ERC conducted 404 direct intakes from individuals raising issues of discrimination-- 30% more intakes than in 2008.**

APPROACH TO CIVIL RIGHTS

2009 Client Intakes: 404



After receiving an intake, the ERC employs a variety of tools to resolve the client's complaint, including: communicating directly with the discriminating party; advocating before an administrative agency; investigating the extent of the problem; advocating for systemic policy change; or — as a last resource — taking enforcement action. Many intakes in 2009 were the genesis of several new systemic investigations.

Education and Outreach

The ERC's Education and Outreach Program is one of the primary tools utilized to effect change. Through workshops, symposia, networking events, and trainings, the ERC reaches thousands of people each year, educating individuals on their civil rights and empowering them to take action. **In 2009, the ERC conducted and participated in 128 outreach events, reaching more than 3,000 people.**

2009 Education and Outreach Events: 128



Conducted for community members, advocates, and private companies, **the ERC's "Know Your Rights" workshops** explain civil rights law, give examples of rights and responsibilities under the law, recommend approaches for self-advocacy, and offer the ERC as a resource when discrimination occurs.

To insure that the ERC itself stays abreast of evolving civil rights issues and laws, **the ERC conducts in-service professional development sessions** for the organization's staff. These monthly continuing education trainings are provided by outside organizations and cover a range of local and national issues. In 2009, presenters included the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), addressing discrimination against the Muslim community; the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, giving training on conducting intakes with people with mental health disabilities; and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, addressing discrimination affecting the LGBT community.

Testing and Research

The ERC's extensive civil rights testing expertise is integral to its investigative efforts and distinguishes the ERC from other civil rights organizations. Testing is a controlled process designed to identify and document differences in treatment accorded to individuals who are similar in every significant aspect except the variable being tested (*e.g.*, race, number of children, sexual orientation). **In 2009, the ERC conducted more than 600 civil rights tests** to uncover systemic discrimination and to educate communities on discriminatory practices.

Led by a full-time testing manager, the ERC maintains a database of more than 100 carefully trained testers who are available for academic research, problem identification and documentation, investigative work, and enforcement. Representing all protected demographics, testers

allow the ERC to expose discrimination that is often not recognized by a single individual.

With its testing, the ERC is able to demonstrate existing rates of discrimination for a particular group, such as the discrimination housing voucher holders face (*see page 10*), or that which people with disabilities face when visiting public spaces (*see page 16*). Through carefully designed testing investigations, the ERC is able to address and cause broad systemic change. As testimony to this expertise, today the ERC's testing methodologies are recognized and accepted by the civil rights community, government agencies, and federal and state courts.

Civil Rights Collaborations

The ERC's recognized civil rights expertise has led national corporations, government agencies, counties, municipalities, and other private fair housing groups to collaborate with the ERC on testing and training projects. By developing training curricula, training employees, creating "best practices," and then testing for compliance with civil rights law, the ERC encourages the private and public sectors to be active participants in preventing discrimination. In 2009, the ERC collaborated with:

- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** – At the request of HUD, the ERC provided civil rights testing services in support of HUD's activities.
- **D.C. Office of Human Rights (DCOHR)** – DCOHR seeks to eradicate discrimination, increase equal opportunity, and protect human rights. DCOHR leads the District's antidiscrimination efforts by enforcing the D.C. Human Rights Act and related laws. Throughout 2009, the ERC conducted civil rights testing on request, and collaborated with OHR on education and outreach events.



- **Municipalities**--A Virginia city contracted the ERC to conduct civil rights testing, evaluating local housing providers' compliance with fair housing laws. The ERC provided recommendations for future compliance activities.
- **Other Fair Housing Organizations**—During 2009, the ERC trained fair housing/ accessibility testers for, and collaborated in civil rights testing with, other fair housing organizations in the Northeast.
- **NVR, Inc.**--Continuing its multi-year collaboration with NVR, a national home-building and mortgage lending business with more than 4,200 employees serving 12 states, the ERC provided Fair Housing training seminars to its employees and conducted compliance and accessibility testing for the company.

ERC Membership

Since 2006, the ERC has operated as a membership organization. Members of the ERC play an integral role in the advancement of civil rights across the country. As the “eyes, ears, and voice” of the ERC, our enthusiastic member/ advocates expand outreach and education to new communities, identify issues of discrimination as they develop, assist in the planning and implementation of investigations, and provide much-needed financial support for the ERC.

Today, the ERC's national membership consists of more than 1,400 individuals living in 33 states and the District of Columbia. The ERC's multi-level membership structure—Free Advocate Membership, \$25 Sponsoring Membership, \$100 Patron Membership, and \$250 Executive Membership—allows each individual to choose their own personal level of participation with the organization.



Enforcement

In some instances, civil rights violations—discrimination—can only be effectively addressed through enforcement. Closely collaborating with civil rights attorneys in the District and across the country, the ERC directs matters of discrimination to administrative agencies and the courts in order to create dramatic, systemic change. The positive impact of enforcement was clearly demonstrated in 2009.

- **Accessible Housing for People with Disabilities**—the ERC's efforts have caused more than 30,000 apartment and condominium units across the country to be remediated to be more accessible for people with disabilities (*see page 12*);
- **Source of Income Discrimination**—the ERC's efforts have caused more than 20,000 apartment units to begin accepting Housing Choice Vouchers in payment of rent (*see page 10*); and
- **Public Accommodations**—the ERC's efforts have caused more than 10,000 retail stores, restaurants, and hotels across the country to be made more accessible to people with disabilities (*see page 16*).

In 2009, concerned law firms and attorneys donated nearly three million dollars in legal service to the ERC's enforcement activities.

THE ERC FAIR HOUSING PROGRAM

An individual's right to choose where he or she lives affects all aspects of life, including employment and educational opportunities, proximity to friends and family, access to transportation, commercial and governmental services, and even personal safety. Yet housing discrimination continues to occur across the country on a daily basis.

In 2009, the ERC continued to shine a bright light on instances of illegal, and sometimes blatant, discrimination against certain groups as they seek housing. Throughout the year, the ERC's Fair Housing Program participated in educational proceedings (*see below*), investigations (*see page 10*), a "Know Your Rights" campaign (*see page 11*), and a new proactive membership tool (*see page 12*), all which made positive systematic change for those seeking housing.

D.C. Fair Housing Symposium

In 2009, the ERC joined, once again, the D.C. Office of Human Rights and the Department of

Housing and Community Development to present the District's 8th Annual Fair Housing Symposium—"Yes We Can! Prevent Housing Discrimination." Presented in conjunction with Fair Housing Month, the April 28th event included more than one-hundred community members, advocates, and government personnel addressing fair housing issues, including disability rights/accessible design and construction, immigrant rights, and predatory lending.

United Nations Special Rapporteur

In November 2009, the ERC organized and joined several other housing and poverty experts in a presentation to the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Mrs. Raquel Rolnik. Working on behalf of the UN, Special Rapporteurs are independent experts tasked with visiting multiple countries and offering recommendations to the U.N. Human Rights Council in order to better protect and preserve human rights. The ERC's presentation focused on its recent investigations and reports on discrimination against housing choice voucher holders (*see page 10*), domestic violence survivors (*see page 15*), and people with disabilities.

This was the ERC's second presentation to a U.N. Special Rapporteur. In 2008, the ERC presented to Dr. Doudou Diene, the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Discrimination.





Creating Impact: Source of Income Discrimination

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is the nation's largest housing subsidy program, assisting more than two million families across the nation to secure clean and safe housing. Using housing vouchers to pay rent on "market-rate" housing, low-income families can move closer to work, reside in safer and diverse neighborhoods, send their children to better schools, and live near better grocery stores, hospitals, and parks. In many instances, a housing voucher is the only thing that stands between a family and homelessness. Unfortunately, either based on unfair stereotypes, or as a guise for discrimination based on race or familial status, families using vouchers often face blatant discrimination when searching for housing.

The ERC continued its multi-year initiative to end this "source of income" discrimination in 2009.

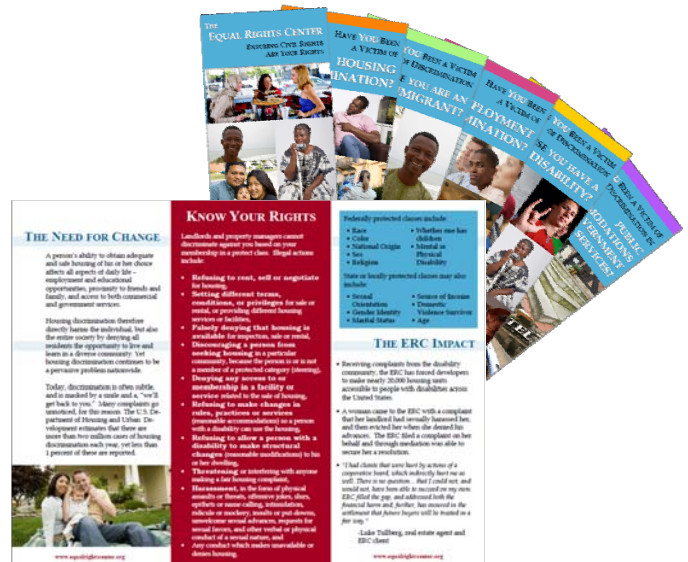
After its ground breaking investigative report, *In Search of Decent Housing in the D.C. Metropolitan Area: The Affordable Housing Crisis for Section 8 Housing Vouchers*, documenting a staggering 61% rate of discrimination against voucher holders in the District when they sought housing, the ERC conducted a similar investigation in Montgomery County, MD which documented a 15% rate of discrimination. The study, *A Step Away from Homelessness: Housing Choice Voucher Holders Denied Housing in Montgomery County, MD*, was published in late 2008.

Taking action on its findings, in 2009, the ERC worked with Montgomery County officials and local property managers to remedy this problem. The ERC pursued seven administrative enforcement actions, and reached positive agreements with four property managers, managing more than twelve properties. The result was that in 2009, **more than 6,500 additional housing units were made available to voucher holders.**

Creating Impact: "Know Your Rights" Awareness Campaign

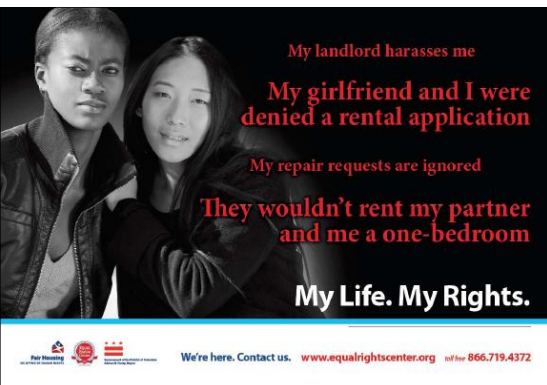
In recognition of the ERC's experience and success in advancing equal opportunity in housing, in 2008 the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) awarded the ERC a \$100,000 grant to advance fair housing and support education and outreach activities throughout 2009.

With this support from HUD, the ERC developed and executed a fair housing campaign designed to educate community members and to train collaborating civil rights advocates. The campaign included hosting community "Know Your Rights" workshops, participating in networking meetings with new advocacy groups, advocating accessible design and construction directly to multifamily housing developers, distributing 20,000 "Know Your Rights" brochures in eight languages, and designing and executing a metro-wide public service announcement (PSA) campaign.



Created in conjunction with the D.C. Office of Human Rights, the PSAs educated survivors of domestic violence, immigrants, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community on their rights under fair housing laws, and offered the ERC as a resource to these communities when discrimination occurs. This campaign reached tens of thousands of people in the District of Columbia each day.

HUD awarded the ERC a perfect 100% Excellent rating for its execution of these activities. Building on this success, HUD has awarded the ERC two additional grants to be executed in 2010--a second education and outreach grant (\$100,000), and an enforcement grant to support the ERC's civil rights testing program (\$275,000). The ERC is extremely grateful to HUD for its continuing support of the ERC's efforts.





Creating Impact: The MHRP

We are a nation that includes more than 60 million people with disabilities. **It is estimated that by 2050 approximately one in every three households will include a person with a disability.** These individuals are protected from housing discrimination by the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and various local laws. Yet, decades after many of these protections were implemented, accessible housing for people with a wide range of disabilities remains the number one problem facing this community.

Created in November 2008, the Multifamily Housing Resource Program (MHRP) operates at a business level in conjunction with developers to promote compliance with the accessibility requirements of federal, state and local laws through education, training, and the implementation of “best practices.”

Today, the MHRP has six national developers as members — Trammell Crow Residential, Bozzuto Group, Dittmar Company, Kettler, Camden Property Trust, and AvalonBay Communities. Making multi-year commitments to the program of over three million dollars, these developers own or operate more than 200,000 housing units across the country, and are powerful messengers for accessibility in housing for all people with disabilities.

Through innovative tools such as a password protected website and an e-learning facility, the MHRP trains members’ employees on accessibility requirements and compliance, provides input on “best practices” to achieve accessibility, and acts as a resource directing its members to accessibility-conscious professionals and vendors.



THE ERC DISABILITY RIGHTS PROGRAM

The disability community – today numbering more than 60 million people – achieved a major policy victory in 2009. Taking effect on January 1, 2009, the American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) reversed years of judicial opinions severely restricting the term “disability” under the ADA and limiting the number of people who were protected under the law.

By broadly defining the term “disability,” the ADAAA expanded the ADA’s critical civil rights protections to individuals living with HIV/AIDS, and those with disabilities that are episodic or in remission but that substantially limit a major life activity when active.

The ERC actively endorsed and promoted

passage of the ADAAA, and continues to be an active participant in advancing progressive disability rights policy. Through education aimed at empowering individuals with disabilities to advocate for themselves (*see below*), promoting disability rights awareness in new communities (*see page 15*), and conducting disability-focused investigations (*see page 16*), the ERC actively advances disability rights every day.

Promoting Self-Advocacy

One of the most important tools in advancing civil rights is each individual’s ability to advocate for him or herself. By educating members of the disability community on their rights, and providing people the tools to

advocate for themselves, the ERC fosters independence and strength. To further these goals, **in 2009, the ERC's Disability Rights Program conducted seven "Know Your Rights" workshops for disability community members, and nine staff trainings for disability rights advocates.**

The ERC also produced and distributed **two new self-advocacy toolkits in 2009**, empowering community members to directly address problems of discrimination. **The "Reasonable Accommodations and Modifications: An Accessibility Self-Advocacy Toolkit" and "Apartment and Condo Fair Housing Accessibility Toolkit"** contain guidance in identifying barriers, present an overview of the law and protections against discrimination, and provide letter templates for individuals' use when communicating problems with housing providers.

MetroAccess

After hundreds of complaints of ill-equipped vehicles, missed rides, and poor, frightening, or life-threatening treatment, the ERC initiated

a class action lawsuit against MetroAccess, the Washington D.C. metropolitan public transportation system for people with disabilities.

As a result of the ERC's representation of more than 20,000 people with disabilities in the District, a federal consent decree entered into in 2008 required MetroAccess to apply \$14 million over four years to improve driver training and vehicles and to establish a system to monitor accessibility issues. Throughout 2009, **the ERC continued to monitor Metro Access' compliance** with this federal court order and noted progress and improvement in MetroAccess' services and treatment of its clients with disabilities.

The ERC also remained an active advocate for the D.C. disability community throughout 2009, testifying before the D.C. Committee on Public Works and Transportation against proposed cuts to MetroAccess services and routes, and conducting a variety of outreach to disability community members and advocates on MetroAccess' improved services.

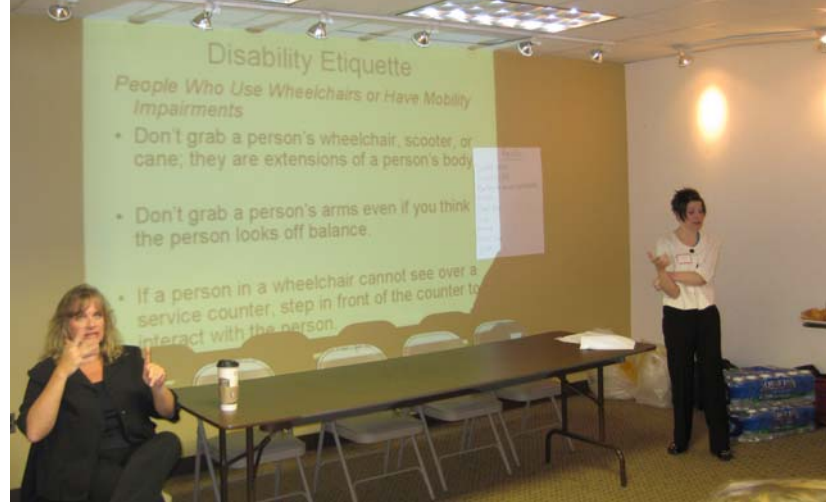


Creating Impact: Disability/Domestic Violence Summit

In 2009, the ERC expanded its commitment to survivors of domestic violence by focusing on a largely overlooked cross section of people – domestic violence survivors with disabilities.

In March 2007, the District of Columbia enacted cutting-edge legislation, *The Protection from Discriminatory Eviction for Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act of 2006*, which provided survivors of domestic violence some of the most progressive housing protections in the country. On the Act's one year anniversary, the ERC documented the first quantitative data available revealing the rates of housing discrimination that survivors of domestic violence encounter.

- Women with disabilities and Deaf women are twice as likely to experience abuse as women without disabilities.
- Adults with developmental disabilities are four to ten times more likely to experience physical/sexual assault than adults without developmental disabilities.
- Violence and abuse are one of the ways in which many people acquire their disabilities in the first place.
- 54%-84% of domestic violence victims experience post traumatic stress disorder, 63%-77% of domestic violence victims experience depression, and 38%-75% experience anxiety.
- In addition to physical, verbal and sexual abuse, people with disabilities experience abuse by having their medications withheld or overdosed, their finances abused, their mobility or breathing aids denied, and their personal care neglected.



In a broad testing investigation across the District, the ERC documented a 65% rate of discrimination against domestic violence survivors as they sought housing. After publishing its findings in *"No Vacancy: Housing Discrimination Against Survivors of Domestic Violence in the District of Columbia,"* the ERC launched a District-wide education campaign, sparking new conversations between the domestic violence and disability communities.

In March of 2009, the ERC's Disability Rights Program worked in collaboration with the District Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH), to sponsor a summit for domestic violence advocates, discussing the intersection between disability and domestic violence. Attended by domestic violence advocates with specialties in deafness, physical disabilities, mental health disabilities, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse, as well as advocates from many domestic violence shelters in the District, the ERC and DASH facilitated a panel discussion with topics ranging from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to disability etiquette and language.

The summit concluded with the goal of increasing awareness about disability within the domestic violence community and promoting the inclusion of accommodations into internal policies and protocols among domestic violence advocates. **The ERC has committed to continue this collaboration in 2010 and will be releasing a guide to disability issues for domestic violence advocates in the fall of 2010.**

Creating Impact: Access to Public Accommodations

Despite the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) nearly 20 years ago, people with disabilities still experience limitation on their daily activities caused by inaccessible shops, offices, and public spaces. The ERC remains committed to making public accommodations – restaurants, hotels, shops, medical care facilities, day care centers, movie theaters, fitness clubs, etc. – accessible. As a result of this commitment, **the ERC has caused more than 10,000 locations to be made accessible to people with disabilities since 2005.**

In 2009, the ERC addressed accessibility issues with CVS. With nearly 7,000 locations nationwide, CVS is the largest retail pharmacy chain in the United States. People depend on CVS for its low prices, close proximities, and easily transferable prescriptions to manage their lives. And yet, to many of the 60 million Americans with disabilities, CVS stores are inaccessible.

After receiving multiple complaints about CVS stores from members with disabilities, the ERC conducted a far-reaching accessibility survey of the chain. Investigating 50 store locations in ten states and the District of Columbia, **the ERC uncovered accessibility barriers at 100% of these locations.** Barriers included: inaccessible aisles, pharmacy counters too high for customers who use wheelchairs, no adequate parking for persons with disabilities, inaccessible check-out counters, inaccessible employment application centers, and blood pressure monitoring stations which were not

accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs. As a result of these findings, in December of 2009, the ERC and three of its members, Marsha Johnson, Charla Ramsey, and Christopher Butler, filed suit against CVS, in order to make such daily necessities, medicines, and medical services available to customers with disabilities.

The ERC also addressed accessibility concerns in 2009 through a joint enforcement effort against national restaurant chain **Cosi**, and in collaboration with the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition, a statewide disability rights advocacy organization, against **Abercrombie & Fitch Co.** – including its Hollister stores.

The ERC's impact was realized in November 2009, when national restaurant chain **Johnny Rockets** agreed to **make all services accessible to people with disabilities, and implement the necessary modifications to policies, practices and procedures in their more than 200 locations nationwide.**



THE ERC IMMIGRANT RIGHTS PROGRAM

Immigration reform was a highly emotional and polarizing issue in 2009. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) continued to increase its presence in communities and its ties to state and local law enforcement utilizing various devices such as 287(g) and Secure Communities agreements.

The unfortunate results of this contentious environment have been increased distrust between immigrant communities and our public protectors, thousands of families torn apart, and, most disturbing, an increasingly more negative attitude toward people of certain national origins whether immigrants or not, and whether documented or not. In this climate, it is no surprise that national origin discrimination is increasing. **In 2009, the ERC intensified outreach to various immigrant communities and increased its efforts to identify instances of national origin discrimination.**

Education and Outreach

The ERC intensified its presence in the immigrant community in 2009 through outreach, **conducting thirteen “Know Your Rights” workshops to immigrant communities, and two staff**

trainings for immigrant rights advocates. By reaching out to English-as-a-Second-Language classes and foreign embassies, the ERC targeted individuals who are often most vulnerable to discrimination because of their limited English proficiency, lack of knowledge of the American legal system, and few resources they trust to turn to for help.

As part of this outreach, the ERC translated its **Immigrants Rights Brochure into seven languages – Spanish, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Amharic, and Arabic –** and instituted **Language Line, an over-the-phone interpretation service with over 170 languages available**, ensuring that all individuals are able access ERC expertise and services.

Partnership for Equity

In November 2009, the Immigrant Rights Program was awarded the Partnership for Equity Grant by the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (CFNCR). CFNCR supports the development of individual leaders of color and nonprofit organizations working to advance social justice and racial equity. This generous grant provided the ERC’s Immigrant Rights Program Manager, Wendy Ramirez, with leadership trainings and peer mentoring sessions which will continue through 2010. The grant also gave the ERC Immigrant Rights Program the opportunity to work with a professional advisor to develop a comprehensive strategic work plan.

The City of Manassas, VA

As culmination of a multi-year effort, in 2008, the ERC overturned discriminatory policies and practices that the city of Manassas and the Manassas City Public Schools had employed against the local Latino community. Utilizing an anonymous tip-line, and confidential records from the public school system, the City carried





out “over-crowding” inspections almost exclusively against Latinos households. As a result of the ERC’s efforts, the anonymous tip-line was shut down, city officials were required to attend fair housing trainings, and the City was required to hire a fair housing advocate.

Throughout 2009, the ERC monitored Manassas’ compliance with these agreements. The Immigrant Rights Program made six compliance visits to Manassas to monitor fair housing signage, distribute literature, and to meet with City personnel. ERC Executive Director, Donald L. Kahl, successfully testified at City Council meetings in favor of funding for the fair housing advocate and for fair housing activities.

Creating Impact: Collaborating for Change

The greater D.C. area is home to a diverse group of immigrant communities. While these communities share some similarities, they also vary widely in their beliefs, customs, and relationships. The ERC works to understand and value each unique community, and to be able to advocate for each unique need.

In 2009, the ERC’s Immigrant Rights Program

reached out to and collaborated with South-East Asian communities, Muslim advocacy organizations, English-as-a-second language courses, and the Language Access Coalition, an alliance that advocates for language access rights within the District.

Through these new networks, the ERC is better able to better stay in touch with and have a lasting impact in the lives of individuals. A prime example of this work unfolded throughout 2009. Having received complaints from Latino tenants in an apartment complex in Washington D.C., of poor service and apartment repair, offensive language, and what appeared to be a pattern of only African-American and white tenants moving into previously Latino rented units, the ERC began working in collaboration with the Latino Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) to address tenant concerns.

The ERC contacted the managing company alerting them to patterns of problems, and, along with LEDC, hosted focus group meetings to mediate between tenant and company concerns. The meetings were successful and led to occupancy policies being made more transparent, and maintenance and service requests honored in a timely manner.

OUR SUPPORTERS

The work of the ERC would not be possible without the support, assistance, and contributions made by others. We are especially thankful to all those who have generously donated time, services, and funds to us in 2009.

Businesses and Organizations

Arena Press
Beveridge & Diamond PC
CARECEN
Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton LLP
Covington & Burling LLP
Crowell & Moring LLP
D.C. Office of Human Rights
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Gilbert Oshinsky LLP
Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center
Foley & Lardner LLP
Hogan & Hartson LLP
Howrey LLP
Jenner & Block LLP
Kelley, Drye & Warren LLP
Kirkland & Ellis, LLP
Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Preston Gates Ellis LLP
King & Spalding LLP
McDermott, Will & Emery LLP
Morrison & Foerster LLP
Pure Talent Graphic Design
Steptoe & Johnson LLP
Turning Technologies
Vincent & Elkins LLP
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
Wiley Rein LLP
Zuckerman Spaeder LLP

Grants

The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
The Public Welfare Foundation
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

\$500 and more

Mr. Roderic Boggs
Ms. Susan L. Gates and Mr. Donald L. Kahl
Monsignor Ralph Kuehner
Mr. Jack Olender
Mr. George D. Ruttinger
Mr. Daniel Silver
Ms. Jackie Simon
Ms. Leslie Turner
Mr. Peter Work

\$100 and more

Mr. Michael J. Baratz
Mr. Herbert M. Bridge
Mrs. Paula Cieplik
Dr. Robert Dinerstein
Mr. James O. Gibson
Mr. David Isbell
Ms. Dayna Coleman Jones
Rev. Dr. James G. and Nancy D. Macdonell
Dr. and Ms. William T. Maddox
Ms. Beatriz Otero
Ms. Michele Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Sachs
Mr. James Sacks
Mr. Frank Serene
Mr. Peter Stratton
Ms. Katherine Toth

\$25 and more

Mr. and Ms. Maurice Axelrad
Ms. Maria Barrera
Mr. and Ms. Stanley Berman
Ms. Wilma Braun
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Mr. and Ms. Herbert Chabot
Mr. Gilbert Dickinson
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Mr. Michael Seng
Ms. Joellen Sexton
Ms. Pamela R. Towns
Ms. Karen Williams-Butler
Mr. and Ms. Ernest Williams

Other Gifts

Ms. Marie Y. Dryden
Mr. Edward L. Erikson
Mr. Michael Firnbacher
Mr. Edward Forman
Mr. Carl Gelfand
Mr. William X. Hawkins
Mr. Joseph Jallah
Ms. Arlene Johnson
Mr. Ouabo Legrand
Mr. Benjamin Rapson
Mr. Stephen Schwartz



CFC #59434



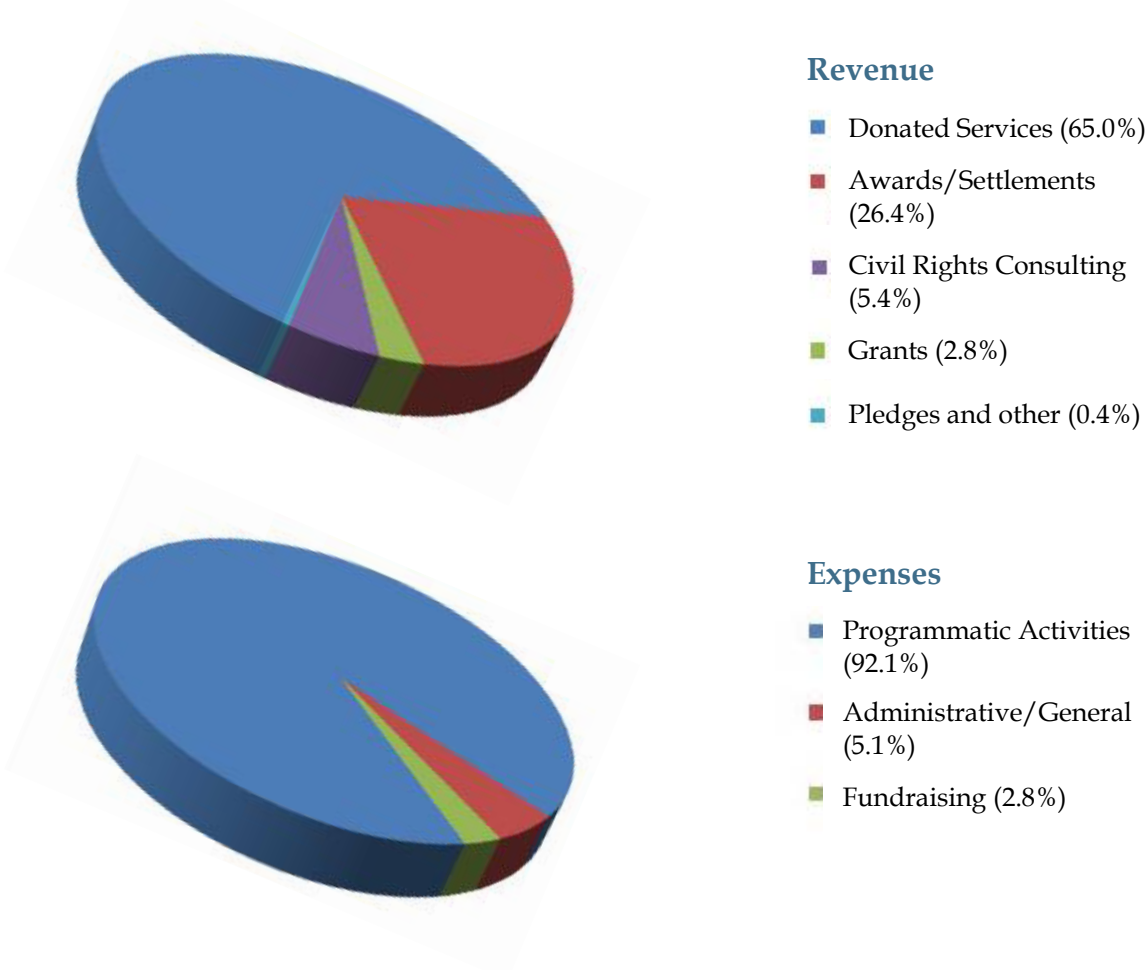
United Way #9397

2009 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Equal Rights Center is steadfastly dedicated to promoting equal opportunity in housing, employment, public accommodations, and government services through education, research, testing, counseling, enforcement, and advocacy. Throughout 2009, the ERC developed momentum in most revenue channels, and we continue to expand our funding base through membership, supporters' contributions, foundation funding, and the provision of civil rights training and testing services to third parties. The addition of a full time Development Manager in 2009 to design and lead the organization's fundraising activities will ensure an even more robust organization in the years to come.

It is through our strong financial foundation that the ERC is able to advocate for civil rights in communities in Washington D.C. and across the United States, and to continually pursue innovative methods for meeting our client's needs. In recognition of the ERC's dedication, accountability, and transparency, the ERC is listed as a National Capital Area United Way member and National Combined Federal Campaign member.

The ERC is a 501(c)3 organization that regularly files the requisite Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service, and conducts an independent financial audit each year. The charts below summarize the ERC's revenues and expenses for the 2009 calendar year, the last period for which audited information is available. These charts and the following financial information reflect the ERC's financial data as of December 31, 2009. Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.



2009 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended December 31, 2009 (with comparative totals from 2008)	2009 Total	2008 Total
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 546,945	\$ 123,237
Accounts Receivable	1,619,426	419,826
Prepaid Expenses	<u>4,471</u>	<u>4,484</u>
Total Current Assets	2,170,842	547,547
Property and Equipment	11,977	25,447
Total Assets	\$ 2,182,819	\$ 573,024
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 33,776	\$ 58,326
Line of Credit	151,393	165,000
Notes Payable	<u>78,010</u>	<u>65,000</u>
Total Current Liabilities	263,179	288,326
Total Liabilities	263,179	288,326
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	544,640	284,698
Temporarily Restricted	<u>1,375,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Total net assets	\$ 1,919,640	\$ 284,698
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 2,182,819	\$ 573,024

2009 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended December 31, 2009 (with comparative totals from 2008)	2009 Total	2008 Total
Support and Revenue		
Contributions — Pledges	\$ 17,145	\$ 16,226
Contributions — Donated Services	2,943,123	5,793,076
Grants — Foundations	27,000	1,000
Grants — Government	99,998	-
Civil Rights Consulting	246,344	476,745
Awards/Settlements	1,194,162	800,654
Other Revenue	-	583
Interest	635	345
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	<u>-</u>	<u>24,500</u>
Total support and revenue	\$ 4,528,407	\$ 7,113,129
Expenses		
Program Services	3,931,569	6,854,609
Supporting Services		
General and Administrative	217,643	191,544
Fundraising	<u>119,253</u>	<u>46,033</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 4,268,465	\$ 7,092,186
Change in Net Assets	1,634,942	(3,557)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>284,698</u>	<u>288,255</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 1,919,640	\$ 284,698

