



# THE EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER **ANNUAL REPORT**

# 2016

# OUR MISSION

The Equal Rights Center (ERC) is a civil rights organization that identifies and seeks to eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations in its home community of Greater Washington DC and nationwide.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

The ERC's core strategy for identifying unlawful and unfair discrimination is civil rights testing. When the ERC identifies discrimination, it seeks to eliminate it through the use of testing data to educate the public and business community, support policy advocacy, conduct compliance testing and training, and, if necessary, take enforcement action.

## TESTER 1



## TESTER 2





# ADVANCEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

IN 2016 WE...

TRAINED  
**100**  
CIVIL RIGHTS  
TESTERS

CONDUCTED **47**  
FAIR HOUSING TRAININGS FOR OUR  
CORPORATE CLIENTS

RESPONDED TO **160**  
INTAKE CALLS AND EMAILS  
REPORTING DISCRIMINATION

INCREASED  
THE NUMBER  
OF HOUSING  
DISCRIMINATION  
REFERRALS TO  
HUD & LOCAL  
GOVERNMENTAL  
AGENCIES BY

**75%**

TWEETED, LIKED AND SHARED  
IMPORTANT DISCRIMINATION  
HEADLINES AND HOT TOPICS TO MORE  
THAN **6,000** FOLLOWERS VIA  
OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

SERVED AS A CATALYST THAT MOVED  
A MAJOR RESTAURANT CHAIN TO  
SURVEY MORE THAN **100**  
OF THEIR STORES FOR ACCESSIBILITY

CONDUCTED **803** CIVIL RIGHTS  
TESTS TO IDENTIFY UNLAWFUL AND  
UNFAIR DISCRIMINATION

INCREASED EARNED MEDIA BY **200%**, INCLUDING COVERAGE BY THE WASHINGTON  
POST, HUFFINGTON POST, THE WASHINGTON TIMES AND THINK PROGRESS.

# OUR PROGRAMS



## FAIR HOUSING

There are many things to consider when finding a home; discrimination shouldn't be one of them.



## DISABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY

The ERC has made more than 65,000 retail locations, restaurants and homes more accessible to people with disabilities.



## EMPLOYMENT

Prohibitions against employment discrimination protect individuals from unfair treatment on the job and help to ensure healthy and productive workplaces.



## PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Since the ERC's founding over 30 years ago, we have remained committed to expanding the protections of civil rights laws for LGBT and Limited English Proficient individuals.



## COMPLIANCE & TRAINING

Focusing on civil rights is not only the right thing to do, it's also smart business.

# DOCUMENTING DISCRIMINATION

Released Unlocking Discrimination report, showing that white and African American female testers seeking housing while posing as having similar criminal backgrounds were treated differently on the basis of race in the Greater Washington, DC region.



*"Housing providers treat black women with criminal histories differently than they treat their white counterparts with similar criminal backgrounds, according to Kate Scott and her colleagues at the Equal Rights Center (ERC)"*

**- How Housing Matters**

In December 2016, the D.C. Council passed the Fair Criminal Records Screening Act for Housing of 2016, a "ban the box" style law to provide housing protections for people with criminal records.

Completed two language access testing projects for DC Office of Human Rights (conducting over 200 tests in 7 languages at 17 agencies) and Columbia Legal Services (testing for Spanish language resources in hospitals across Washington State).

Released the Room for Change report, presenting the findings from the first civil rights testing project evaluating the level of discrimination transgender individuals face in retail stores.



*"A recent study by the Equal Rights Center (ERC) found that transgender people often face discrimination while simply shopping."*

**- Think Progress**

# TAKING ACTION

Worked with the DC government to ensure that Ward 3's early voting site was remediated in advance of voting and served as an ADA Compliance Assistant on Election Day.

Settled long-pending litigation with Equity Residential, based in Chicago, Illinois. Under the agreement, Equity Residential is required to survey and remediate certain conditions in housing units across the United States at 85 residential properties, thus ensuring that tens of millions of people across the country with disabilities have equal access to housing as required by the Fair Housing Act (FHA).

Alerted Wendy's/DavCo and negotiated a plan to remediate accessibility concerns throughout their Mid-Atlantic restaurants, including those that were identified through our testing investigation to be non-compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ERC will continue to monitor this process and reengage as needed.

Hosted a webinar for local and national advocates to discuss the Room For Change report's findings and implications. Presenters included leading LGBT advocates, Laura E. Durso, Director of LGBT Progress of the Center for American Progress (CAP); Kylar W. Broadus, Executive Director of the Trans People of Color Coalition; and Harper Jean Tobin, Director of Policy of the National Center for Transgender Equality.



# PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS



Co-hosted the 15th Annual DC Fair Housing Month Symposium in collaboration with our District partners - The Office of Human Rights, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the DC Developmental Disabilities Council. Michael Allen, of Relman, Dane & Colfax PLLC, facilitated a panel discussion about affirmatively furthering fair housing that included expert speakers Danilo Pelletiere, DHCD; Johanna Shreve, Office of the Tenant Advocate; Melody Taylor-Blancher, HUD; Sara Tribe, DC Office on Aging; and Caroline Elmendorf, The Bozzuto Group.

Hosted our annual Multifamily Housing Resource Program meeting as a convening for housing industry partners to share and learn best practices and effective strategies in accessible design and construction.



Multi-Family Housing Resource Program  
Year In Review (2015-2016)

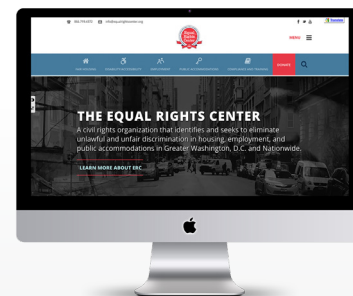
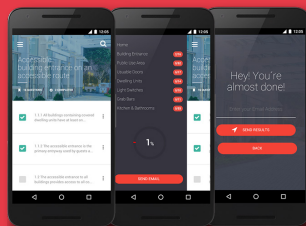


Convened our Annual Members' Meeting and Alumni Reception at Busboys and Poets and collectively celebrated our dedicated members including special awards honoring Roderic Boggs, Esq. as Alumni of the Year, AvalonBay Communities, Inc. as Corporate Partner of the Year, Rosemary Ciotti, RN, MSN, NP as Advocate of the Year and Jerome A. Murphy, Esq. with an Outstanding Public Service Award.



# RAISING VISIBILITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

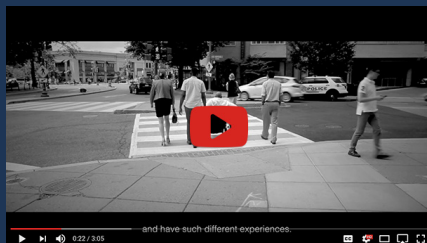
Created our 1st app – the Fair Housing Checklist App. The new app transforms the ERC's Fair Housing Checklist into a dynamic mobile application that highlights the seven accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act. It enables general contractors, architects, developers and other housing industry professionals to upload and toggle between multiple construction projects. The app is available in Google Play and Apple stores, and can be found by searching for the phrase "fair housing". This app is designed to ensure that multifamily housing providers have the right tools to build accessible housing for individuals with disabilities right from the start.



Launched a new website that is fully accessible.



Transitioned the ERC's online training platform to a third-party hosted site, Litmos, where we can now market online trainings directly from our website to the general public.



Produced a new fair housing video, highlighting our work and resources within the DMV.

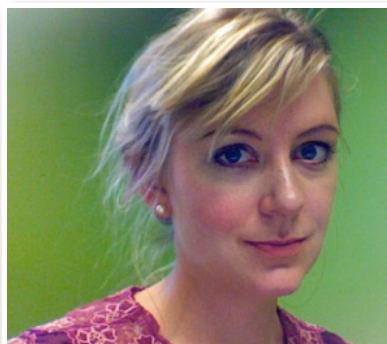


Produced #GiveALittleMoreRoom video highlighting our members' issues with the inaccessibility of Kohl's stores.

# STAFF



**MELVINA C. FORD**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



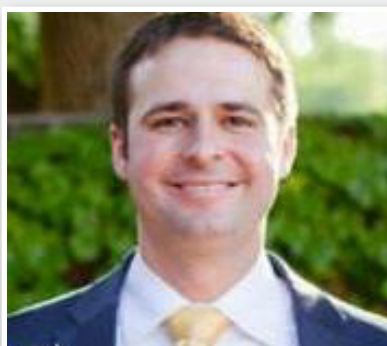
**KATE SCOTT**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



**CAMILLE BROWN**  
FAIR HOUSING PROGRAM SENIOR  
COORDINATOR



**MELISSA FOBEAR**  
SENIOR MANAGER OF OPERATIONS



**BRIAN MCKENZIE**  
FAIR HOUSING EDUCATION SENIOR  
COORDINATOR



**KATHERINE PEARSON**  
DIRECTOR OF ACCESSIBILITY RIGHTS

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OPERATIONS COORDINATOR



**ALEXIS SQUIRE**  
SENIOR MANAGER OF EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS



**SUSAN MCCLANNAHAN**  
FAIR HOUSING INTAKE AND GRANT  
COORDINATOR



**HALLIE YOUNG**  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ASSISTANT

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Kim Keenan, Esq.

Rev. Dr. James G. Macdonell

Beatriz "BB" Otero





# MEMBERS MATTER

**WE ARE OVER 8,000 MEMBERS STRONG  
AND GROWING**

“ I choose to be a member of the Equal Rights Center because they are an organization that I can work with and support in ensuring there is advocacy happening for people with disabilities. **Civil rights** is what they do. They actually take action, not just talk about it; and they make real changes to make the world a better place for people like me. ”

*Heidi Case – ERC Member*

# STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

## AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015

ASSETS			
		2016	2015
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 1,350,627	\$ 71,610
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$1,000 and \$0 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively		\$ 279,464	\$ 294,526
Prepaid expenses		\$ 6,688	\$ 6,480
Total current assets		<u>\$ 1,636,779</u>	<u>\$ 372,616</u>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Equipment/ Furniture		\$ 151,418	\$ 151,418
Less: Accumulated depreciation and amortization		\$ (151,418)	\$ (151,418)
Net fixed assets		<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>			
Accounts receivable, net of current portion		\$ 339,383	\$ 537,078
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u><b>\$ 1,976,162</b></u>	<u><b>\$ 909,694</b></u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (DEFICIT)</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		\$ 13,423	\$ 69,972
Accrued salaries and related benefits		\$ 21,394	\$ 16,691
Total current liabilities		<u>\$ 34,817</u>	<u>\$ 86,663</u>
<b>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</b>			
Deferred revenue		\$ 644,964	\$ 838,964
Deferred lease liability		\$ 33,794	\$ 44,771
Total long-term liabilities		<u>\$ 678,758</u>	<u>\$ 883,735</u>
Total liabilities		<u>\$ 713,575</u>	<u>\$ 970,398</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
Unrestricted		\$ 1,262,587	\$ (127,080)
Unrestricted		\$ -	\$ 66,376
Total net assets (deficit)		<u>\$ 1,262,587</u>	<u>\$ (60,704)</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS (DEFICIT)</b>		<u><b>\$ 1,976,162</b></u>	<u><b>\$ 909,694</b></u>



# STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015

	2016	2015
	Total	Total
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Contributions	\$ 81,099	\$ 16,993
Foundation grants	\$ 18,755	\$ 120,000
Government grants	\$ 435,240	\$ 436,303
Contracts	\$ 335,891	\$ 367,094
Membership	\$ 321,500	\$ 496,533
Contributed services	\$ 1,299,574	\$ 743,258
Settlements and awards	\$ 1,512,551	\$ 220,000
Other revenue	\$ 15,340	\$ –
Net assets released from donor restrictions	\$ –	\$ –
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 4,019,950</b>	<b>\$ 2,400,181</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Services	\$ 2,160,837	\$ 1,713,999
Supporting Services:		
General and Administrative	\$ 489,557	\$ 325,592
Fundraising	\$ 46,265	\$ 114,043
Total supporting services	\$ 535,822	\$ 439,635
Total expenses	\$ 2,696,659	\$ 2,153,634
Changes in net assets	\$ 1,323,291	\$ 246,547
Net assets (deficit) at beginning of year, as restated	\$ (60,704)	\$ (307,251)
<b>NET ASSETS (DEFICIT) AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 1,262,587</b>	<b>\$ (60,704)</b>



## THE EQUAL RIGHTS CENTER

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