



Building Civily. Engaged Collectively. **The Equal Rights Center**

2015 ERC IMPACT REPORT



OUR MISSION

To advance civil rights for all in housing, employment and access to public accommodations.

WHAT WE DO

We work with individuals, businesses, government agencies, policymakers and nonprofit organizations to identify, investigate and remediate acts of discrimination. We accomplish this by focusing our efforts and resources into the following key areas: testing, advocacy, training, outreach, research and enforcement. Collectively these efforts and collaborations increase the capacity and opportunity for a more just society.

WHO WE ARE

Since 1983, the Equal Rights Center has been at the forefront of protecting the civil rights of citizens against discriminatory practices. As the means of discrimination change, so have the ERC's strategies and efforts. Today our innovative testing methodologies and programs effectively detect and address both blatant and concealed acts of discrimination. Along with our thousands of members in all 50 states and more than 30 corporate partners and clients, the ERC is delivering a multi-disciplinary approach to identifying, addressing and eliminating discriminatory practices both in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States.



NEW. Better. **Different.**

We are more than halfway through the year and 18 months into our new leadership. The ERC is evolving and transitioning at a record pace. During this time the substantial support, buy-in and collaboration of our partners, donors, board and staff, has allowed us to make significant strides. We are always looking for new, better and different ways to make a bigger impact on the way we protect and advance civil rights. This commitment to give our best is the driving force behind our 2015 accomplishments. From operations to programming, we took down the barriers, strategically assessed our approach and discovered some great opportunities to make a real difference.

Check out what we
accomplished and
how we got there.



Conducted nearly **1,000 civil rights tests**



Trained over **100 civil rights testers**



Received over **170 intakes**



Increased our membership base
by **1,000 new members**



Increased our **Corporate Trainings by 7%**

They say you are only as good as your team and our team is pretty awesome and growing! In 2015 we welcomed a diverse group of committed professionals to help advance our mission.



OUR PROGRAM COMMITMENTS

Each of our program areas – Fair Housing, Fair Employment, Disability Rights, Immigrant Rights and Corporate Partnerships and Training – are interrelated and inform our approach to advancing civil rights and eliminating discrimination.



FAIR HOUSING

works to eliminate discrimination in housing rentals and sales, home warranty coverage, insurance, lending, redlining and reverse redlining.



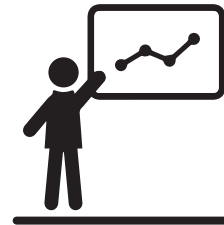
DISABILITY RIGHTS

takes a multifaceted approach to protecting the civil rights of people with disabilities and ensuring that they have equal access to medical and government offices, restaurants, transportation and housing.



FAIR EMPLOYMENT

strives to eliminate unlawful and unfair barriers to employment and ensure equal opportunities and treatment in the workplace.



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS & TRAINING

provides trainings and testing services designed to enhance compliance with civil rights laws and to promote best practices.



IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

responds to complaints from individuals who have experienced discrimination based on national origin, race, and religion.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

We found that by connecting with other civil minded organizations and leaders on initiatives, we significantly maximize our reach and tackle some of the most challenging issues of our time, as well as celebrate our differences.

- 1 **Were awarded a \$100,000** Arcus Foundation grant to launch our new initiative Room for Change to examine the treatment of transgender shoppers.

- 2 Co-hosted the 14th Annual DC Fair Housing Symposium in collaboration with our District partners - the Office of Human Rights, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department on Disability Services. **HUD Assistant Secretary Gustavo Velasquez provided the keynote address to more than 120 attendees.**



- 3 Participated in a panel event and press conference hosted by Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders (SAGE) to announce the launch of a National LGBT Elder Housing Initiative, focused on acquiring safe and affordable housing for older LGBT adults, a rising issue.

- 4 Joined the DC Office of Human Rights and 17 other organizations to promote #EndtheAwkward, a one day-long campaign that engaged **over 600 local residents and 1200 employees** at 46 businesses to raise awareness on disability issues.



- 5 Initiated, along with the National Association of the Deaf, a strategic partnership to investigate how individuals who are deaf are treated in the hiring process. The investigation developed new and innovative methodologies and utilized social media networking websites to assess the nature and frequency of such discrimination.

- 6 Continued serving on the executive committee of the DC Language Access Coalition - an alliance of community-based and civil rights organizations advocating for language access rights within the District of Columbia.

OUR MISSION SUPPORTS GOOD BUSINESS

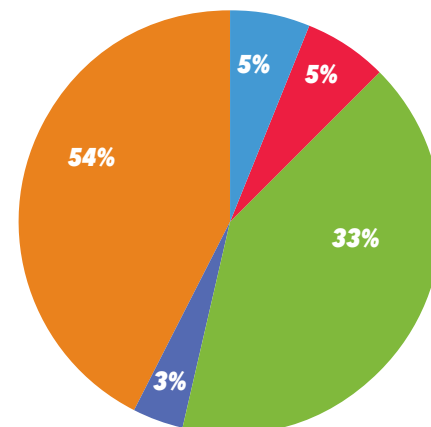
Opportunities to align our mission and our work with companies making strides towards building a culture of equity, inclusiveness and access, is always a good thing. This year we saw growth from the private sector in a myriad of ways. Through policy changes, rulings and ERC resources, we recognize that instilling social and civil responsibilities within the community is everyone's business.

COLLECTIVELY WE...

- 1 Added two new members, Garrett Companies and Questar to our Multifamily Housing Resource Program (MHRP).
- 2 **Designed and launched a new online training course:** Accessible and Usable Doors. This course will support our MHRP members with industry-wide accessibility concerns.
- 3 **Launched 6 resource webinars** on our online learning portal, the Equal Rights Learning Center (ERLC).
- 4 **Trained over 500 corporate employees** through our online system (ERLC), **a 20 % increase from 2014.**
- 5 **Validated our members' rights-** The U.S. District Court of Illinois upheld the ERC's class allegations in an accessibility based lawsuit filed against Kohl's.
- 6 **Worked alongside Freedom to Work,** resulting in a Presidential Executive Order prompting Exxon Mobile to add gay and transgender employees to the corporation's equal employment policies.
- 7 **Provided nearly 50 referrals** in response to inquiry calls about workplace rights through fair employment services.
- 8 **Developed a methodology** to address compliance with "Fair Chance Hiring" and "Ban-the-Box" ordinances.

Corporate Trainings 2015 Q1-Q3

- ACCESSIBLE DOORS COURSE
- SENSITIVITY
- REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS
- TRAIN THE TRAINER
- BASIC FAIR HOUSING



RAISING VISIBILITY AND EXPANDING OUR REACH

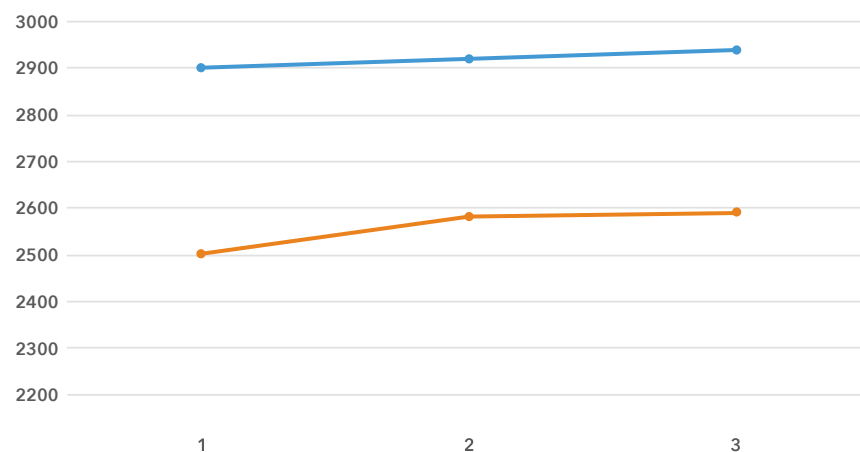
Our mission addresses national issues and in 2015 we made an asserted effort to profile our work at a national level. Leveraging various outlets - we served as thought-leaders, increased our social media, and revamped our marketing and outreach efforts to connect in new ways with emerging and existing audiences alike.

COLLECTIVELY WE...

- 1 Reached 8,000 members and growing!**
- Participated and presented at Urban America Forward: Civil Rights Roundtable Series, hosted by the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at the University of Chicago.
- 3 Assembled, front and center at U.S. Supreme Court's post decision rally for the Texas Department of Housing vs. the Inclusive Communities Project.**
- 4 Increased our social media activity**
- 5 Our website equalrightscenter.org received a 12% increase from new visitors.**
- Released a new Source of Income Toolkit.
- 7 Presented at American University's Exploring Social Justice series about civil rights testing and practices.**
- Served as a panelist at Project Sentinel's 8th Annual Fair Housing Symposium in Mountain View, California.
- 9 Featured in Univision segment concerning HUD and fair housing as it relates to discrimination on the basis of familial status in the Latino community.**
- 10 Provided critical data to the Center for Investigative Reporting on discrimination by staffing agencies.**

Social Media Following Q1-Q3

— TWITTER
— FACEBOOK



IN THE WORKS

Moving forward, we'll continue with the same spirit of collective impact, partnerships and strategic development for 2016. Here's a look ahead for what's to come.

COLLECTIVELY WE WILL...

- 1** We've developed **new testing methodologies** specifically designed to identify discrimination against LGBT individuals facing homelessness. Once this investigation is complete, we look forward to sharing these results in a new report in 2016.
- 2** The ERC has been **conducting research and reconnaissance** around predatory lending. We've held meetings with partner organizations and government agencies to discuss discriminatory lending practices in the auto lending market and the work that is currently being done to prevent it. We are excited about our role in addressing this prevalent issue in 2016.
- 3** The ERC is currently **researching funding options** for a new project to test whether and to what extent unaccompanied children currently migrating from Central and Latin America are having trouble enrolling in public school. The testing would also seek to determine whether and to what extent public schools are operating as a resource referral and access point for these children and their guardians.



As we go into 2016, the ERC is honing in on strategic objectives and focusing on activities that **achieve** the greatest impact; so we are pleased to be one of this year's Compass Service Grant recipients for Strategic Alignment - valued at \$150,000!



We'd love to hear from you. **Stay involved and stay connected.**
There is more to do. We encourage you to join us!



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