



2024 HOUSING EQUALITY CONFERENCE

UNLOCKING
HOUSING ACCESS



PITTSBURGH

FEATURING:



**RICHARD
ROTHSTEIN**

*Co-author, 'Just Action' &
Author, 'Color of Law'*



**LEAH
ROTHSTEIN**

*Co-author, 'Just
Action'*



**GARRY
GILLIAM**

*Former NFL athlete,
CEO, The Bridge ECO Village*

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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THANK YOU!

At PHRC, we are so grateful for everyone who made this conference possible. It was an incredible day of conversation and inspiration to continue the act of working for housing justice.

We owe special thanks to our ASL interpreters and captioners for making this event accessible, to the agencies who shared information at networking tables, and to our hosts at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

We'd like to share some thoughts, reflections and feedback that arose from the conference and to invite you to continue this conversation in support of housing opportunities for all Pennsylvanians.

You can find links to the session recordings throughout this summary. Please feel free to view and share.



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ENSURING HOUSING PROTECTIONS FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

BREAKOUT SESSION 1A (9-10:15AM)



The session highlighted the housing challenges and impacts faced by survivors of domestic violence and their families at a federal, state, and local level. You can view the recording of the video [here](#).

Moderator: Shaheeda Wilks, Investigator, PHRC

Panelists:

Megan Confer Hammond, Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh
Rhonda Fleming, Chief of Prevention, Intervention, & Outreach, The Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh
Juliet Sharrow, Founder & Executive Director, Thrive Ministry
Rachel Shepherd, Executive Director, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations
Gerald 'J R' Waltemyer, Victim Assistance Coordinator, PA Board of Probation & Parole, Office of the Victim Advocate



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FAIR HOUSING FOCUS: A LIGHTNING ROUND SESSION

BREAKOUT SESSION 1B (9-10:15AM)



This session shared short, targeted talks on timely issues impacting housing opportunities throughout Pennsylvania. You can view a recording of the session [here](#).

Moderator: Gregory Holts, Investigator, PHRC

Speakers:

Regis Charlton, Deputy Director, [Disability Options Network, Center for Independent Living](#)

Samantha Vollrath, [811 PRA Program Lead, Inglis](#)

Ashley Walkowiak, Director of Policy, Intergovernmental Affairs, & Mediation, [PHRC](#)

Lauren Berman, Esq., Staff Attorney, [Pennsylvania Utility Law Project](#)

M. Joel Bolstein, Esq., Commission Chair, [PHRC](#)

Kierstyn Marcucci, Project Manager & Managing Attorney, [Fair Housing Law Center, Summit Legal Aid](#)

Chad Dion Lassiter, Executive Director, [PHRC](#)



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TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS FOR BLACK AND BROWN FAMILIES IN HOUSING

BREAKOUT SESSION 2A (10:30-11:30AM)



In this session, speakers Tammy Thompson and Charlise Smith delved into the critical issues and transformative strategies surrounding rental housing and homeownership for Black and Brown communities. You can view the recording of the session [here](#).

Speakers:

Charlise Smith, Founding Executive Director, Willasae's Agency for Vision and Empowerment (WAVE)

Tammy Thompson, Founding Executive Director, Catapult Greater Pittsburgh



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INVESTIGATING ATYPICAL HOUSING

BREAKOUT SESSION 2B (10:30-11:30AM)



This talk discussed uncommon or unusual housing arrangements that Derrick has come across in his over nine years of working as an investigator for the PHRC. You can view the recording [here](#).

Presenter: Derrick Testa, Investigator, PHRC



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LUNCH PROGRAM AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY LEAH & RICHARD ROTHSTEIN

**CO-AUTHORS, "JUST ACTION: HOW TO CHALLENGE SEGREGATION
ENACTED UNDER THE COLOR OF LAW"**

The Rothsteins shared a powerful address covering the United States' history of discriminatory laws and practices, how that impacts our housing inequalities today, and what we can do to correct these injustices. You can view the keynote address [here](#).



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AWARDS & SPECIAL RECOGNITION

WE WERE PLEASED TO AWARD THREE EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUALS WITH AWARDS AT THIS EVENT IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS HOUSING JUSTICE:

- **ADRIAN GARCIA**, DIRECTOR OF ENFORCEMENT, PHRC
- **LT. GOVERNOR AUSTIN DAVIS** (ACCEPTED ON HIS BEHALF BY STEVEN WILLIAMS)
- **MAYOR ED GAINEY**, CITY OF PITTSBURGH



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OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND CREATING PATHWAYS TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

BREAKOUT SESSION 3A (1:45-2:45PM)



Panelists discussed Pennsylvania homeownership demographics and the challenges faced by communities of color and the LGBTQ+ community during the homebuying process. You can view the recording [here](#).

Moderator: Tracee Carter, Chair Pennsylvania Association of Realtors® Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Panelists:

Gloria J. Besley, President, Pittsburgh Realtist Professionals

Preston Moore, President, Pennsylvania Association of Realtors®

Rose Hanh Yuan, President, Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the Asian Real Estate Association of America

Melissa Young, President, LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance, Pittsburgh Chapter



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A COMMUNITY EDUCATION TOOLKIT FOR HOUSING ALLOCATION AI

BREAKOUT SESSION 3B (1:45-2:45PM)

In this session, Professor Shen introduced a novel community education toolkit that explains the design and development of a housing allocation AI, with a goal of promoting AI/ML knowledge building and community engagement practices among practicing social workers and providers in housing support.

You can view the session recording [here](#).

Presenter: Hong Shen, Assistant Research Professor, Human Computer Interaction Institute, Carnegie Mellon University



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CLOSING KEYNOTE: GARY GILLIAM

FORMER NFL ATHLETE, CEO, THE BRIDGE ECO VILLAGE

2:45-4:00PM

In this closing session, Gary Gilliam shared his personal story of working through challenges as he advanced in scholarship, athletics, and entrepreneurship. He encouraged attendees to work towards housing justice together. You can view the recording of the session [here](#).



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CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

"There are many organizations in PA, doing some fantastic work for Fair Housing."

"I really enjoyed the fair housing lightning round session, it was great hearing from a diverse set of speakers on a diverse and vital set of topics."



"I loved learning the resources that were here. I am not a PA native and I was an am so excited to utilize and learn more resources and how to bring them together to have better wraparound services."



"I really like the dual focus the speakers had on developing ways to take care of people, as an integral part of revitalizing, rather than just buildings"



"I haven't read Just Action yet, but I'm inspired to do so. I'm ready to take action!"



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NETWORKING TABLES

Thank you to all of the organizations who shared information about their services throughout the conference!

- [Adams Rescue Mission](#)
- [Asian Real Estate Association of Greater Philadelphia](#)
- [Disability Options Network](#)
- [Inglis](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance](#)
- [NAACP Housing Committee](#)
- [Pennsylvania Association of Realtors](#)
- [Pennsylvania Utility Law Project](#)
- [Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations](#)
- [Fair Housing Law Center](#)
- [The Bridge](#)



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CONTINUE YOUR FAIR HOUSING LEARNING: FREE RESOURCES FROM PHRC

Fair Housing Empower Hour

PHRC Fair Housing Training Programs

The State of Fair Housing In the Commonwealth of PA White Paper

PHRC Speaks: Fair Housing in the 21st Century.



pennsylvania
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

FAIR HOUSING EMPOWER HOUR

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & FAIR HOUSING APRIL 24, 2024	ACCESSIBILITY & FAIR HOUSING MAY 29, 2024	AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING JUNE 26, 2024
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Domestic Violence & Fair Housing: *Savannah of domestic violence should not lose their housing because of their abusive actions. Learn more about how fair housing protections apply to students seeking domestic violence.*

Accessibility & Fair Housing: *The Fair Housing and Americans with Disabilities Act create protections to ensure individuals with disabilities can use and enjoy their housing. Learn more in this online training.*

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: *Learn about connecting housing legislation and inequities. We'll discuss historical housing practices and how we can take action towards a more equitable housing future in Pennsylvania.*

[REGISTER HERE](#) [REGISTER HERE](#) [REGISTER HERE](#)

ALL SESSIONS ARE HELD FROM 12-1PM VIA TEAMS
Questions? Contact Brittany Mellingier at bmellingier@phrc.pa.gov




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HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

THE STATE OF FAIR HOUSING IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

PHRC Speaks: Fair Housing in the 21st Century

Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 3pm

The Journey to a New Home



Adrian Garcia
Show Host
Director of Enforcement
PHRC



Valentia
Director, Lancaster and South Central Offices
Church World Service



Training Programs

Are you looking for an informed presenter to speak to your community or organization on subjects affecting their ability to live, work, and learn free from discrimination? Training and events are tailored to the specific needs of your organization or community and can be workshop or seminar style and CEU/CLE (for specific trainings, email to learn more).

PHRC trainers are available to present a variety of social justice programs including but not limited to:

- Civil Rights & Filing a Complaint**
 - Civil Rights Law and PHRC Jurisdiction
 - Disability & Reasonable Accommodation
 - PHRC Overview & How to File a Complaint
- Preventing Discrimination in the Workplace and Schools**
 - Bullying and Harassment Prevention
 - Conflict Resolution
 - Cross-cultural Communication
 - Sexual Discrimination in the Workplace
 - Sexual Harassment Prevention
- Bias, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
 - Bias and Hate Speech
 - Cultural Awareness and Humility
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (DEIB)
 - Implicit Bias for Law Enforcement
 - Intersectionality of Discrimination and Trauma
 - Unconscious Bias
- Fair Housing Rights**
 - Fair Housing Fundamentals
 - Fair Housing for LGBTQ+ Individuals
 - Fair Housing for Municipal Leaders
 - Fair Housing & Criminal Backgrounds
 - Fair Housing & Domestic Violence
 - Fair Housing & Individuals with Disabilities
 - Fair Housing & Hoarding
 - Service & Support Animals
 - Fair Lending
 - Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
 - Redlining - Yesterday & Today

To learn more, contact phrc@pa.gov or fill out an [online training request at phrc-pa.gov](#)

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TAKE ACTION

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT WITH PHRC

If you believe you've experienced unlawful discrimination in housing, employment, education, or public accommodations, you can file a complaint with the PHRC.

You can start the process by:

- Calling 717-787-4410
- Completing a questionnaire, and submitting it to PHRC:
- Email: phrc@pa.gov
- Fax: (717) 787-0420 or (717) 214-0584
- Mail or Drop off:
 - **Harrisburg Regional Office**
333 Market Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101-2210
 - **Philadelphia Regional Office**
110 North 8th Street, Suite 501
Philadelphia, PA 19107
 - **Pittsburgh Regional Office**
301 Fifth Avenue, Suite 390, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Learn more at www.phrc.pa.gov

WAYS YOU CAN ADVOCATE FOR HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Connect with your local leaders
- Attend local government meetings
- Learn about your local zoning ordinances and community development plans
- Get involved with your community's fair housing planning process – advocating for plans and resources to support unmet housing needs experienced by marginalized communities
- Support affordable housing development in your neighborhood
- Contact your legislators about your community's housing needs

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Special thanks to the Fair Housing Conference planning committee:

**Carlos Alejandro
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Carrie Gagliano
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Gregory Holts
Brittany Mellinger
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