

## HOPE Awarded \$125,000 HUD Grant to Train Public Housing Authorities

HOPE was awarded Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP) grant funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct an Education and Outreach Initiative designed to provide training to Public Housing Authorities throughout Florida, along with other housing providers receiving federal financial assistance. The training will cover fair housing and other federal civil rights related program requirements. Additionally, the training will cover pertinent laws and implementing regulations which prohibit discrimination and mandate accessibility in federally funded housing and non-housing programs for persons with disabilities.

Best practices will be shared as part of capacity building for participants, in addition to resources to enhance the participants' compliance efforts. HOPE has partnered with the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (FAHRO), a membership organization of over one hundred Florida public housing agencies and entities that manage public housing, housing choice vouchers, farm worker housing, community development, or other low-income housing programs. The project will not only further fair housing, but result in the development of a fair housing & civil rights compliance training program that can be utilized by recipients of federal funds for housing related programs nationwide.

HOPE, Inc. fights housing discrimination to ensure your civil rights. We are the only full-service non-profit fair housing agency servicing Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.

We have three-tiered strategy of (1) Education & Outreach, (2) Intake & Counseling, and (3) Private Enforcement. Thanks to federal, state and local funding, all of our services are free to the public. We are here to honor Martin Luther King's legacy of a just and equal society.

If you wish to join us as a tester or volunteer, please call (305) 651-4673 in Miami-Dade or (954) 567-0545 in Broward.

Thanks!

## Partnership with GLBT-Focused Organizations Expands Anti-Discrimination Outreach

Over the past year, thanks to a grant from the Miami Foundation, HOPE has been able to connect with organizations that focus on the issues and needs of people in South Florida's GLBT population. This has led to new opportunities to further efforts in fighting housing discrimination by broadening the base of people who are hearing about HOPE's work. Through these organizations and their clients, HOPE can reach more people who may unfortunately be (or, who may unfortunately later become) victims of housing discrimination. In return, these organizations now have HOPE to go to as a resource in their own efforts to meet the needs of their clients.

HOPE, Inc. has teamed up with a number of different entities to increase its GLBT outreach.

- Together, **SAVE Dade** and HOPE produced a brochure that addresses housing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The brochure has been distributed at numerous events. Additionally, SAVE Dade and HOPE have conducted surveys to get an understanding of whether people understand the housing rights of people identifying as GLBT. 100 people were surveyed, and the results are on page 3 of this newsletter.
- HOPE is a member of the **Miami-Dade Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce**, and as such, has been afforded the opportunity to attend events that are geared toward serving the GLBT population of South Florida. The Chamber has also been a great means for HOPE to meet other organizations.

*Continued on page 3*



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
11501 NW 2nd Avenue Miami, FL 33168  
TEL: (305) 651-4673 FAX/TDD: (305) 759-2440

BROWARD COUNTY  
3201 Federal Hwy., Suite 303 Oakland Park, FL 33306  
TEL: (954) 567-0545 FAX: (954) 567-0549

### 2011-2012 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### CHAIRPERSON

Melanie Garman  
*Mercantil Commercebank*

#### VICE CHAIRPERSON

Ron A. Werner, MPA  
*Retired Miami-Dade County*

#### TREASURER

Marta Navarro  
*CNC Management*

#### SECRETARY

Victor Romano, Ph.D.,  
*Barry University, Dept. of Sociology & Criminology*

Steven P. Befera, Esq.

*Befera Law Firm*

Darlene Bell-Alexander

*Law Offices of Darlene Bell-Alexander*

Bradford Brown

*NAACP*

Donna Crump-Butler

*Bank United*

Karla Gottlieb

*Human Services Coalition*

Karl Kennedy

*Miami Beach Community Development Corporation*

Mary MacNamara

*Total Bank*

Marcos Regalado

*Retired Miami Dade County, Equal Opportunity Board*

Juan Rojas

*Gibraltar Private Bank & Trust*

Eugene Simmons

*City National Bank*

Bill Thompson

*HOPE Founder/President Emeritus*

#### PRESIDENT & CEO

Keenya J. Robertson, Esq.

*HOPE Inc.'s mission is to fight housing discrimination in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties and to ensure equal housing opportunities throughout Florida. HOPE Forum is made possible by grants from USHUD, Miami-Dade County, Broward County and the cities of Miami, Miami Beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens, Ft. Lauderdale, Plantation, Pompano Beach, Lauderhill, Hollywood, Margate and the Town of Davie. The findings and substance of this publication are dedicated to the public. The authors and publishers are solely responsible for the accuracy of statements, content, and interpretations in this newsletter. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the grantors.*



## *Message from the President & CEO*

Special thanks to Senator Oscar Braynon II and Representative Barbara Watson who have sponsored proposed legislation (SB442 and HB 283) that would clarify that an aggrieved person may file a civil action under the Florida Fair Housing Act without first filing an administrative complaint with the Florida Commission on Human Relations (FCHR).

Belletete v. Halford, a 2004 Florida appellate court decision, imposed an administrative exhaustion requirement on aggrieved persons, meaning they must first file an administrative complaint with FCHR before being allowed to file a civil action in court; *although no such requirement appears on the face of the Florida Fair Housing Act*. The Belletete ruling has since been rejected by a federal district court in Milsap v. Cornerstone as it failed to follow the established tenet of statutory construction: “. . . if a state law is patterned after a federal law on the same subject, the Florida law will be accorded the same construction as given to the federal act in the federal courts.” In Dugoirand v. Alhambra Cove, a lower Florida court also rejected the Belletete decision as inconsistent with the U.S. Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Federal Fair Housing Act in Gladstone v. Village of Bellwood, where the court found that the “Fair Housing Act is not structured to keep complaints brought under it from reaching federal courts, or even to assure that administrative process runs its full course.

The Florida Fair Housing Act is enforced by FCHR, which receives funds from HUD as a substantially equivalent agency. The Federal Fair Housing Act authorizes HUD to certify local enforcement agencies as “substantially equivalent” if the local law meets the requirements set forth in the Fair Housing Act and HUD’s implementing regulations. In a letter to FCHR dated October 17, 2011, HUD officials indicated that a clarifying amendment or rule is necessary in order to resolve the substantial equivalency issue caused by the Belletete case and that “failure to address this issue potentially jeopardizes the continued substantial equivalence certification” of the Florida Fair Housing Act and FCHR’s continued participation in the HUD program from which it receives funding.

# GLBT Survey Results

“HOPE Partners with GLBT-Focused...” continued from page 1

- HOPE has been working with **Empower “U”, Inc.** to address the concerns of people affected by HIV/AIDS, which has disproportionately affected minority and GLBT communities in South Florida.
- **Unity Coalition** takes on the concerns of the Hispanic GLBT population, and hosted Celebrate Orgullo, a festival celebrating GLBT pride and Hispanic heritage. HOPE was among the organizations represented at the Miami Beach event, which was the first of its kind in South Florida.
- HOPE was one of the organizations present at the beginning of the year meeting of the **Sexual Minority Network of Miami-Dade County Public Schools**. At the meeting, hosted by the School District’s office of Mental Health and Crisis Management Services, counselors from across the county were informed about HOPE’s services.
- HOPE is a community resource for the **Yes Institute**, which works throughout the US and Latin America to enhance communication and education on gender and orientation in order to prevent harassment. The Yes Institute is connected to numerous entities providing services to the GLBT community, and has referred HOPE as an agency dealing with housing issues.

HOPE is grateful for these partnerships and others, and is always seeking to broaden its base of partnerships for increased community outreach. Please contact us if you would like to help our efforts to connect with greater numbers people!

HOPE surveyed 100 people identifying as GLBT to gauge fair housing knowledge and evaluate outreach needs. Almost all participants were from Miami or Miami Beach and most didn’t know where they could file a housing discrimination complaint (the few submitted answers included 911 and HOPE). Here are the questions, correct answers, and different responses:

- Is sexual orientation a protected class under federal law?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 25%, No 35%, Unsure 40%
- Is sexual orientation a protected class under Florida law?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 10%, No 33%, Unsure 57%
- Is sexual orientation a protected class under Miami-Dade law?  
Answer: Yes. Responses: Yes 69%, No 2%, Unsure 29%
- Can a landlord advertise as “traditional family” friendly?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 73%, No 11%, Unsure 16%
- Can a landlord make two adults of the same sex rent a 2-bedroom unit, instead of allowing them to rent a 1-bedroom unit?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 27%, No 35%, Unsure 38%
- Can a landlord make a lesbian sign a month-to-month lease, just in case other residents oppose her living there?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 2%, No 63%, Unsure 35%
- Can a landlord advertise a preference to rent to a gay couple in a GLBT magazine?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 67%, No 9%, Unsure 24%
- Can a landlord legally make same-sex couples live in a different building than that of families with children?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 16%, No 71%, Unsure 13%
- Can a landlord legally make same-sex couples use an “adults only” pool?  
Answer: No. Responses: Yes 2%, No 67%, Unsure 31%
- Can a landlord legally refuse to rent to a man because he identifies as female and wears women’s clothing?  
Answer: No, but only currently outlawed in Miami Beach. Responses: Yes 12%, No 59%, Unsure 29%

These results help clarify and show the need for continued public education about fair housing. We thank our survey participants!

## Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

In the summer of 2011, HOPE did outreach in **Broward County, including Davie, Ft. Lauderdale, Plantation, and Tamarac**. Presentations were conducted at New Visions, Housing Foundation of America, Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida, Oasis of HOPE, Broward County Housing Authority, Urban League of Broward County, and New Visions. HOPE also conducted a provider training in the City of Hollywood, as well as the Florida Neighborhoods Conference, a state-wide housing conference. HOPE also did outreach in **Miami-Dade County, including the City of Miami Beach, and the City of North Miami**. HOPE conducted trainings at Miami Beach CDC, Centro Campesino, NHS, Visions to Victory, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, LGBT Visitor’s Bureau, Edison Neighborhood Services, and Trinity Empowerment; provider trainings at Everglades Housing Group and the City of Miami Beach; and the Camel Baptist Church Health Fair and the Miami Dade Gay Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Symposium on Aging.



Yes, I want to invest in the future of my community by becoming a member of HOPE, Inc.!

Please fill out this membership application and mail with your TAX-DEDUCTIBLE contribution to:

HOPE, Inc.  
Attn: Membership  
11501 NW 2nd Ave  
Miami, FL 33168

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$35.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$75.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend (\$100.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Profit (\$250.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporate (\$500.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Good Neighbor (\$1,000.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining Partner (\$10,000.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Juniors For Justice (\$5.00) (13-18 years old)

\_\_\_\_\_ Pennies from Heaven (children 12 and under)

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to contribute but please send me *HOPE, Inc. Forum*

**Fair Housing laws prohibit discrimination in the rental or sale of housing because of:**

- ◇ Race
- ◇ Color
- ◇ National Origin
- ◇ Religion
- ◇ Marital Status
- ◇ Pregnancy
- ◇ Sex
- ◇ Familial Status
- ◇ Disability
- ◇ Age
- ◇ Sexual Orientation
- ◇ Gender Identity

**Do you suspect you have been a victim of Housing discrimination?  
Help is available. Don't delay.**

**Call the HOPE, Inc. DISCRIMINATION HELPLINE!  
Miami-Dade: 305-651-HOPE (4673)  
Broward: 954-567-0545  
Or file a complaint at [www.hopefhc.com](http://www.hopefhc.com)**



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
FT. LAUDERDALE,  
FL  
PERMIT NO. 32

Bill Thompson Building  
11501 NW 2nd Avenue  
Miami, FL 33168  
Phone: 305-651-HOPE [4673] • Fax/TDD: 305-759-2440

