

HOPE, Inc. — **FORUM NEWSLETTER**

Spring 2026 Edition / Vol 105

The Latest Addition to the HOPE Family You Need to Meet

A huge welcome to DeForest Barnette, our fantastic new team member! We are so excited to have his energy, expertise, and fresh perspective enriching our organization. His arrival marks an exciting chapter for HOPE, and we are truly grateful to have him on board. We can't wait to see the amazing contributions he'll bring to our mission. Welcome to HOPE!

Please give a warm welcome to DeForest Barnette, our new Education & Outreach Coordinator! While we are sure many of you have already met him out and about in the community, we'd like to take this opportunity to officially present him. DeForest, a 31-year-old Bolivian American, recently traded Riverside, California, for Miami to embark on graduate studies at FIU, and we're thrilled to have him. He comes to us with nearly a decade of experience as a dedicated community and political organizer, having championed causes through political campaigning, nonprofit service, and advocacy. His impressive background includes work with impactful groups like The Black Progressive Action Pac, The League of Conservation Voters, and Somos Votantes. In his downtime, DeForest enjoys hiking, kayaking, and, like many, unwinding with video games.



You are protected from housing
discrimination based on:

1. Race
2. Color
3. National Origin
4. Sex
5. Religion
6. Familial Status
7. Disability



Fair Housing and Climate Resilience in South Florida: Who Gets to Stay When the Water Rises

In South Florida, climate change is not a future problem. It shows up in flooded streets, rising insurance bills, and buildings that never fully recover after storms. As seas rise and storms intensify, housing access is shifting fast. Fair housing law now plays a decisive role in who stays housed, who rebuilds, and who gets forced out.

Climate risk does not hit everyone equally. Low-income families, seniors, people with disabilities, and communities of color face the highest exposure. Many live in flood-prone areas because safer housing costs more. When climate pressure pushes these groups out, the result is not random. It is displacement. Fair housing law exists to stop climate risk from becoming legalized exclusion.

Flood zones shape housing access across Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Properties in high-risk areas carry higher insurance premiums. After storms, some landlords delay repairs, raise rents, or refuse lease renewals. Others quietly remove tenants and re-list units at higher prices. When landlords treat tenants differently based on assumptions tied to income, disability, family status, or source of income, fair housing violations follow.

Insurance plays a major role in this cycle. After major storms, insurers raise rates or leave entire neighborhoods. Landlords often pass these costs to tenants with little explanation. In some cases, insurance changes become an excuse to push out tenants who use vouchers, need repairs, or ask for accommodations. Fair housing law protects tenants from selective enforcement during these moments of instability.

The rebuilding phase creates even higher risk. After hurricanes or severe flooding, housing supply drops overnight. Temporary housing becomes scarce. Screening tightens. Rejection rates climb. Families with vouchers, larger households, or accessibility needs face immediate barriers. Fair housing protections do not pause during emergencies. They matter more when the market tightens.

People with disabilities face unique threats during climate events. Elevators fail. Accessible units flood. Backup power disappears. Requests for accessible relocation, temporary modifications, or flexible rent arrangements remain protected under fair housing law. Denying these requests during recovery creates long-term displacement and harm.

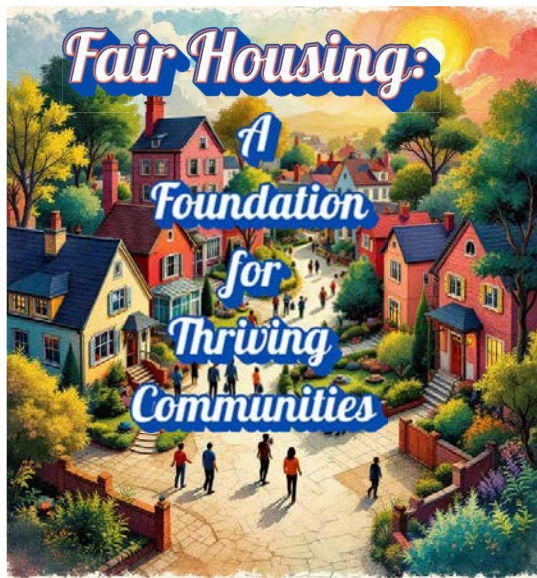
Seniors aging in place face similar challenges. Fixed incomes limit mobility. Longtime residents lose housing after storm damage. Rebuilding efforts often favor higher-end redevelopment, not affordability or accessibility. Without fair housing enforcement, recovery dollars speed up displacement instead of stability.

Local climate resilience plans often overlook fair housing. Zoning changes, buyout programs, and redevelopment decisions determine who gets access to safer ground. When fair housing analysis is missing, protected classes lose access to rebuilt neighborhoods, transit corridors, and resilient housing stock. Climate adaptation without equity deepens segregation. Local governments and housing agencies carry responsibility. Federal disaster recovery funds require fair housing compliance. This includes affirmatively furthering fair housing. Recovery dollars must expand access to safe housing, not shrink it. Data tracking, transparency, and community oversight shape whether recovery serves everyone or only a few.

South Florida's future depends on inclusive resilience. Housing stability affects public health, workforce retention, and economic survival. Fair housing law anchors climate adaptation by ensuring protection does not depend on income, age, disability, or neighborhood.

Climate change is rewriting the housing map of South Florida. Fair housing law determines whether that map becomes more inclusive or more divided.



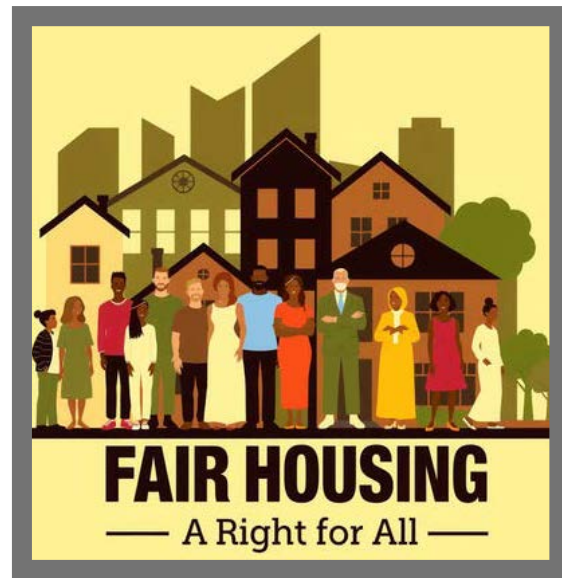


HOPE wants to thank our wonderful guests, presenters, and hosts for a successful Dade County Fair Housing Month celebration event.

The event was a wonderful showcase of community spirit, cooperation, and fair housing engagement.

Special thanks to:

- Our hosts Camillus House
- Miami Dade Commission on Human Rights for presenting
- Dante Bonner from the Florida Commission on Human Relations for being our keynote speaker
- Self Help Credit Union for presenting
- Our incredible sponsors
 - TD Bank
 - City National Bank
 - BankUnited
 - Self Help Credit Union



HOPE, Inc. would like to thank our wonderful guests, presenters, and hosts for a successful Broward County Fair Housing Month celebration event. Alongside the Miami Dade event, it was a wonderful showcase of community spirit, cooperation, and fair housing engagement.

Special thanks to:

- Broward County Human Rights Section
- Broward County Property Appraiser Office
- Woman in Distress
- J Courtney Cunningham - our keynote speaker
- Our incredible sponsors
 - City National Bank
 - The City of Tamarac
 - The City of Fort Lauderdale
 - The City of Pembroke Pines
 - The City of Plantation
 - Bank United
 - Broward Affordable Housing Taskforce



EVERY MONTH IS FAIR HOUSING MONTH

Just Because April Ended Doesn't Mean Our Mission Ends

Now that Fair Housing Month has passed, we want to remind everyone: the fight for fair housing is far from over. While April served as an important reminder of the progress we've made and the work still ahead, fair housing is not a seasonal issue, it's a daily commitment.

Every person deserves the freedom to choose where they want to live without fear of discrimination. Whether you're looking for a cozy apartment in the city, a quiet suburban home, or a welcoming neighborhood for your family, that choice should be yours to make—free from illegal barriers.

Unfortunately, housing discrimination still exists in many forms. It can show up as:

- A landlord refusing to rent to you
- A realtor steering you away from certain neighborhoods
- Unequal treatment during the application process
- Denial of reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities

No one should be denied the opportunity to live in the community of their choice simply because of who they are. Fair Housing Month may be over, but our commitment is not. We stand ready to:

- Educate communities about their rights
- Investigate claims of discrimination
- Advocate for strong fair housing policies
- Enforce the laws that protect vulnerable populations

Housing discrimination hurts individuals, families, and entire communities. By staying vigilant and proactive, we can build a future where everyone has equal access to safe, affordable housing.

The fight for fair housing is a year-round mission. It takes all of us—advocates, policymakers, housing providers, and community members—to ensure that the promise of fair housing becomes a reality for everyone.

Let's keep the momentum going. The fight continues.

If you or someone you know has experienced housing discrimination, contact HOPE, Inc. today. Together, we can ensure that housing discrimination has no place in our communities.

HOPE, Inc. Participates in Polk County Fair Housing Event

We're proud to share that HOPE, Inc. attended and presented at the 2nd Annual Polk County Fair Housing Event, hosted in the City of Winter Haven, FL on.

The event brought together key stakeholders from across the housing industry, featuring presentations from the Florida Commission on Human Relations, HOPE, Inc., and other respected industry professionals. Together, we explored important topics related to fair housing rights, enforcement, and advocacy.

The event was a huge success, with strong attendance from housing providers, community advocates, and residents eager to learn more about their rights and responsibilities under fair housing laws.

HOPE, Inc. was honored to be part of this important conversation and looks forward to continuing our partnership with the community to promote fair and equal housing for all.



Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The concept of, “Affirmatively furthering fair housing,” is based on section 808 (e) (5) of the Federal Fair Housing Act. We dedicate this space to Miami Dade and Broward County jurisdictions that receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and partner with HOPE to implement the following outreach.

Broward Outreach Area

Fair Housing and Predatory Lending Presentations

- **Amazing Community Partners:** 2/14/26, 3/14/26, 4/11/26
- **AARK1 Realty:** 2/21/26
- **Broward County Housing Authority, Lauderdale Lakes:** 2/14/26, 3/14/26, 4/11/26
- **Consolidated Credit Solutions:** 3/28/26
- **Hispanic Unity:** 2/22/26, 4/18/26
- **Housing Foundation of America, Broward County:** 2/7/26
- **Oasis of Hope, Pompano Beach:** 2/21/26, 4/18/26
- **Urban League of Broward County:** 2/14/26, 2/25/26, 3/25/26, 4/11/26, 4/22/26

Resource Fairs

- **Senior Resource Fair, SW Focal Point:** 2/23/26



Miami Dade Outreach Area

Fair Housing and Predatory Lending Presentations

- Centro Campesino: Miami Dade County, 1/17, 1/24, 2/28, 3/14, 3/28, 4/13, 4/27
- Cuban American National Council: City of Miami, 4/24, 4/29
- Oasis of Hope CDC: City of Miami, Miami Dade County, 2/28, 3/21, 4/25
- Housing Foundation of America: City of Miami, Miami Dade County, 2/7, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7, 4/11, 4/18
- Expert Resources Community Center: 2/14, 3/21, 4/11
- Haitian American Community Development Corporation: 2/20
- Gang Alternative Uplift Service Partnership: 2/12
- Miami Beach Disability Access Committee: 1/20
- City of Miami Beach: 3/14
- Cuban National Council: 3/27, 4/24

Community Resource Fairs

- Pain2Purpose Teen/Family Summit: 3/7
- WestCare/ The Village South Health Fair Series: 2/24, 3/11, 4/9, 4/14
- University of Miami Career/Resource Fair: 2/11
- FIU College of Law: 2/25
- Autism Superpowers: 3/28, 4/4
- Miami Dade County Office of Community Advocacy: 4/30



TESTERS NEEDED

Become a Fair Housing Tester!

Pay \$60-\$140 per assignment!

Requirements:

1. BE 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER
2. HAVE GOOD OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS
3. POSSESS EXCELLENT WRITING SKILLS
4. BE ABLE TO DONATE APPROX. 3 HOURS FOR EACH TEST
5. HAVE ACCESS TO RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION
6. BE PUNCTUAL

To sign up for the next tester training, please contact:
HOPE inc @ (305)651-4673, or luxmy@hopefhc.com

If you have any sort of fair housing inquiry, or wish to ask about our community workshops/housing provider trainings, please do not hesitate to contact us at our Broward or Miami Dade offices.

Call, email, or visit either office in person Monday-Friday 8:30am-5pm

Miami Dade office: 305-651-4673

11501 N.W. 2nd Avenue Miami, FL 33168

Broward office: 954-567-0545

6491 Sunset Strip, Suite 8 Sunrise, FL 33313

Email: hopefhc@comcast.net

This document is available in an accessible format for people with disabilities upon request. Please call Daniel Howe at (305)651-4673

