



Mayor's Committee on Human Relations

Annual Report

2013-2014



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MISSION OF COMMITTEE

The mission of the Bismarck Human Relations Committee is to protect and promote the personal dignity of all Bismarck citizens and eliminate any discriminatory barriers that prevent them from reaching their full human potential. We seek to make education and compliance a meaningful and visible strategy as we work to recognize the value of a diverse community.

GOALS OF COMMITTEE

The Bismarck Human Relations Committee has the following goals and objectives as defined in its strategic plan:

1. To exhibit leadership in the areas of civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will be comprised of individuals that represent and are knowledgeable of diverse populations.
 - b. The committee members will practice and model action that exemplify nondiscrimination, acceptance, and respect of diversity.
2. To educate the public about civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will implement a public education plan to identify and address issues.
 - b. The committee will actively plan, sponsor, and participate in events that promote and celebrate diversity.
3. To identify issues of principle concern in the area of civil and human rights:
 - a. The committee will provide access for public input.
 - b. The committee will prioritize issues based on input received.
4. To recommend priorities and objectives about issues of community concern to the City Commission:
 - a. The committee will serve as a liaison in issues of civil and human rights between the community and the City Commissioners.
5. To advocate for compliance with federal and state laws regarding civil and human rights, including North Dakota Century Code Chapters 14-02.4 (Human Rights) and 14-02.5 (Housing):
 - a. The committee will provide information about current laws through multiple formats.
 - b. The committee will maintain data regarding civil and human rights issues.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE

Bismarck Ordinance 5208 created the Bismarck Human Relations Committee and received final passage on October 8, 2002. The committee's purpose is to promote acceptance and respect for diversity through educational programs and activities and to discourage all forms of discrimination including protected class discrimination, ADA violations, or other statutory or constitutional violations (Chapter 2-11).

APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEE

The committee consists of nine members who serve without pay. Member appointment is by the President of the Board of City Commissioners, and subject to confirmation by the Board of City Commissioners. Appointees serve three-year terms.

COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES AND LOCATION

The Bismarck Human Relations Committee meets on the third Monday of each month (except on holidays) at 5:15 pm in the First Floor Conference Room of the City/County Office Building, 221 North 5th Street in downtown Bismarck. Meetings are open to the public and accept public comment.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sharon Korsmo, Chair
Brenda Finn, Vice-Chair
Jan Carter
Sunanda Jain
Barbara Schmitt
Karel Sovak
Danielle Stuckle
Julie Thiery
Michelle Thomas

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

A copy of the Human Relations Committee Ordinance, Strategic Plan, Annual Report, complaint filing forms, and other information may be accessed online at www.bismarck.org or by mailing:

Mayor's Committee on Human Relations
City of Bismarck
PO Box 5503
221 N 5 Street
Bismarck, ND 58506-5503

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES 2013-2014

The annual Diversity University event was held on the campus of Bismarck State University in September and October 2013. On September 12, United States Attorney Tim Purdon spoke about public safety in the reservation communities in North Dakota. On September 19, Josh Boschee, House of Representatives member from District 44, spoke about discrimination against the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) community and how the fight for equality has and will impact North Dakota. On September 26, a panel discussion about diversity in the workplace featured Rose Stoller from the Consensus Council, Inc., Michelle Miller from KLJ, Adele Page from Legal Services of ND, Karen Siegfried from Job Service, ND, and Mark Del Vecchio from MDU. The series wrapped up on October 3 with a Celebration of Cultures event. These events were all held free of charge and open to the public. See attached flyer for more information.

The winner of the 2014 Human Rights Essay and Poetry Contest was announced on April 10th with a visit by Bismarck Mayor John Warford to the winner's classroom at Sunrise Elementary. Paighton Volk, a fifth grader, was presented with a certificate from Mayor Warford while her family, classmates, and members of the Human Rights Committee looked on. Mayor Warford wrapped up the visit by answering several questions from the students, and posed for photos with the Volk family. The flyer announcing the contest, the winning poem, and a photograph are attached.



Mayor John Warford and members of the Human Relations Committee present Humanitarian Award to Nan Johnson

On July 11, 2013 the annual Humanitarian Award was presented to Nan Johnson, site manager at Crescent Manor. The facility is an affordable senior high rise in Bismarck, and Johnson was nominated by Dot Frank for her dedication of time, friendship, support, and advocacy for the residents. The Humanitarian Award recognizes individuals, businesses, and organizations that have exhibited leadership in the areas of human and civil rights with a focus upon recognizing those that educate, identify issues, and address human rights. The news release is attached.

DIVERSITY UNIVERSITY

Embracing Diversity at BSC

Presentations are FREE and the public is encouraged to attend

Embracing Diversity Events

Traditions of Moldova



Tuesday, September 10 • BSC National Energy Center of Excellence (NECE) Basin Electric Auditorium • Noon to 1 p.m.

Join us as a visiting delegation of five energy professionals from the Republic of Moldova present an overview of their country and traditions. Hear more about this Eastern European country, which declared itself an independent state in 1991 at the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Located between Romania and Ukraine, Moldova shares the same latitude with North Dakota.

Human Rights Abuses & Challenges



Tuesday, September 24 • BSC NECE • Basin Electric Auditorium • 10:30-11:45 a.m., 1:30-2:45 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m.

Human rights abuses and the challenges and threats that human rights advocates face – Bjorn Engesland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, and Kristi Rendahl, ND Prairie Talks coordinator and torture rehabilitation facilitator, will offer three presentations.

2013 Diversity University

The Challenges of Public Safety on Reservations in North Dakota and the Role of the U.S. Attorney's Office



Thursday, September 12 • BSC Student Union • Prairie Room • 7 p.m.

A discussion of public safety in the Native American reservation communities in North Dakota. U.S. Attorney Tim Purdon will discuss the scope of the challenge based on his experiences and the path forward under the U.S. Attorney's Office Anti-Violence Strategy for Tribal Communities.



Progress for LGBT Americans. What does this mean for North Dakotans?

Thursday, September 19 • BSC Student Union • Prairie Room • 7 p.m.

Great progress continues to be made towards LGBT equality in the United States as local governments, state legislatures and the U.S. Supreme Court recognize that discrimination towards LGBT Americans is wrong and harmful to our communities. As progress is made elsewhere, what does that mean for LGBT North Dakotans? Join us for a thought provoking discussion from District 44 House of Representatives member Josh Boschee.

Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

Thursday, September 26 • BSC Student Union • Prairie Room • 7 p.m.

As North Dakota becomes increasingly diverse, what are the key policies needed to assure that we have open and welcoming workplaces? This discussion will focus on building healthy, culturally competent employment opportunities for all. This panel discussion will be facilitated by Rose Stoller of The Consensus Council, Inc. and will feature Michelle Miller a recruiter from KLJ; Adele Page a staff attorney from Legal Services of ND; Karen Siegfried a customer service consultant from Job Service ND; and Mark Del Vecchio Vice-President of Human Resources from MDU.

Diversity University presentations sponsored by:



HUMAN RIGHTS ESSAY AND POETRY CONTEST



Back Row L-R: Danielle Stuckle and Barbara Schmitt, both representing the Human Rights Committee; Volk's Parents and Grandfather; and Mayor John Warford, Front Row L-R: Volk's sister and contest winner Paighton Volk

Human Rights

A Poem by Paighton Volk
Sunrise Elementary School, Grade 5

Whether you are black, tan, purple, or white, we all have our equal rights.

Here are some I will say right here. Now listen up, because I want to make this clear.

It doesn't matter what color you are, because you know you are always a star.

No one should have to be treated so cruel. Now you know it's a #1 rule.

No more violence, no more attacks, no more bias, and no more hacks.

Different opinions or different thoughts, there are more I know there are lots.

Please don't tease; please don't fight; now you know some of your rights,

Now don't go out and go astray, I hope you accept everyone today.



HUMAN RIGHTS ESSAY & POETRY CONTEST

***CALLING BISMARCK STUDENTS!**

- Grades 4-6: Write about a person or idea that fosters respect for Human Rights

- Grades 7-9: Write about your concept of leadership for Human Rights

***CHOOSE TO WRITE AN ESSAY OR A POEM ON HUMAN RIGHTS!**

All entries must be postmarked or e-mailed and received by the Human Relations Committee by 5:00 p.m. February 14, 2014. Please limit entries to one page.

Two outstanding entries from each age level will be selected. One essay and one poem from each.

The Bismarck Human Relations Committee (HRC) sponsors this contest to heighten awareness of human rights amongst students in the community. The mission of the Human Relations Committee is to protect and promote the personal dignity of all Bismarck citizens and to eliminate any discriminatory barriers that prevent them from reaching their full human potential.

Outstanding entries will be recognized at a ceremony Mid-march 2014 where Bismarck Mayor John Warford will present the selected entrants with a special award. The selected essay or poem will be displayed on the Human Relations committee web page*

www.bismarck.org

*All submitted items and content become the property of the City of Bismarck and may be used for the non-commercial purpose of illustration, display or publication.

Submit entries to:

City of Bismarck
Human Relations Committee
221 N. 5th St.
Bismarck, ND 58506-
5503
E-mail: [gdavid@nd.gov](mailto:g david@nd.gov)

Students are encouraged to visit the United Nations website <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> to learn more about "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and related documents. Additional information about Human Rights Day may also be found at <http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/2013/about.shtml>

HUMANITARIAN AWARD



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

July 11, 2013

For More Information, Contact:

Jane Halverson

Bismarck Human Relations Committee

**Bismarck Human Relations Committee Announces
Humanitarian Award Recipient**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The Bismarck Human Relations Committee has selected Nan Johnson of Crescent Manor as the recipient of the 2013 Humanitarian Award. She was selected for her outstanding support, friendship, advocacy and humanitarian efforts that serve to preserve the dignity of the residents of Crescent Manor and bring joy to their lives. Nan was presented the Humanitarian Award by Mayor John Warford and members of the Bismarck Human Relations Committee at an award ceremony held today at Crescent Manor.

Nan Johnson serves as the site manager for Crescent Manor, an affordable senior high rise in Bismarck and was nominated by Dot Frank. In her nomination letter Dot describes Nan as one “who could easily clock in each day, collect payments, dish up meals and depart. However, as a true humanitarian she dedicates her time to serve friendship, support and advocacy to all residents within the facility.”

“Nan is a shining example of humanitarianism through her selfless acts of advocacy, kindness and service. She improves the lives and brings joy to those whose age, loss of independence and limited incomes combined can make daily living a challenge,” said Mayor Warford.

The Bismarck Human Relations Humanitarian Award honors an individual, business or organization that has exhibited leadership in the areas of human and civil rights with a focus upon recognizing those that educate, identify issues and address human rights issues.

The mission of the Bismarck Human Relations Committee is to protect and promote the personal dignity of all Bismarck citizens and eliminate any discriminatory barriers that prevent them from reaching their full human potential. For more information please visit www.bismarck.org

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mayor's Committee on Human Relations

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