Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and
the National Fair Housing Alliance

commUNITY2000

Building Community in a Nation of Neighborhoods

Boston MA

Chicago IL

San Diego CA

This report is an initiative of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund's CommUNITY 2000 project. In releasing this report, LCCREF's goals are to highlight the important role that innovative public/private partnerships like CommUNITY 2000 can play in the effort to confront bigotry and bias in our neighborhoods; showcase the many innovative and creative strategies developed through the project that can be used by anyone interested in addressing community tensions and nurturing welcoming neighborhoods; and set the stage for future and ongoing coalition-based efforts to alleviate housing-related tensions in communities throughout the nation. We also want to emphasize the critical role local fair housing centers can play in improving inter-group relations as an extension of their fair housing enforcement efforts.

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Karen McGill Lawson, ED, LCCREF

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The events of September 11 brought CommUNITY 2000's accomplishments into focus. Thanks to CommUNITY 2000, in several communities around the country, those concerned about reprisals were able to act more decisively than ever before. Within three days after the attacks, the Fair Housing Council of San Diego sent fliers in Arabic explaining state and federal protections from hate crimes and distributed the template nationally. Publication was possible because of groundwork laid months earlier for Latino, Asian and African translations. A few days later, the national team of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the National Fair Housing Alliance announced publication of its "Fight Hate" hate crime prevention and response handbook. Chicago and Boston CommUNITY 2000 partners' local advisory networks released statements condemning acts of hate.

This report documents the first phase of CommUNITY 2000 from July 1999 to December 2001. CommUNITY 2000 responds to community tensions that arise when people exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act. Its three-fold goals:

- To develop and implement a variety of specific strategies which foster good will in neighbor hoods nationwide.
- To evaluate and document the processes and outcomes of those strategies.
- To compile a Menu of Strategies that details which programs were successful, and why. The Menu is available for use and adaptation by any person or group looking for ways to reduce tensions in their own neighborhoods. The Menu of Strategies is CommUNITY 2000's answer to the question, "Can we all get along?" It says, "Yes. Here's how."

An itemization of historic civil rights accomplishments under recent pressure of rollback points to the need for a project like CommUNITY 2000. Court decisions have chipped away at affirmative action. Racial profiling abuses took greater clarity after September 11. Isolated high profile media stories continue, from Matthew Shepard in Wyoming to James Byrd in east Texas. The 1988 fair housing protections for people with disabilities are only partially realized. The 2000 Census found more diversity but persistent economic and racial segregation. Analysts acknowledge the great strides of the last 50 years in fair housing do not mean the nation has reached its goals.

A Menu of Strategies promotes use of the work by CommUNITY 2000 in communities nationwide.

- Nationally, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the National Fair Housing Alliance built coalitions and disseminated information. LCCREF convened five meetings of local and national civil rights and fair housing advocates to exchange information; commissioned an independent evaluation of the project; used technology to advance social change through special web sites; and assessed the civil rights and fair housing climate in 10 cities. This environmental scan yielded the leadership example of Cincinnati's Housing Opportunities Made

Easy (HOME), which is specifically recognized for excellence. NFHA created and disseminated two publications: A "Fight Hate" prevention and response guide; and "Fight Hate" rapid response strategy guide.

- The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston increased tenant involvement in South Boston public housing and allied with a community coalition in South Boston addressing the needs of low-income families. The Fair Housing Center performed and published a 30-page study of Greater Boston rental discrimination. And the housing center reached a settlement with the Boston Globe ending discriminatory rental advertisements.

- Chicago's "Congregations Building CommUNITY" weekends in Spring 2000 and 2001 brought together religious leaders to address their moral obligations to promote fair housing and racial justice under the direction of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities. The Lake County Anti-Hate Crimes Task Force forged a partnership between the Chicago Leadership Council and a suburban state's attorney to examine a recently rural, now suburban and increasingly populous county's commitment to working on hate crimes and other bias issues. The Leadership Council formed an Immigrant Fair Housing Roundtable, convened a Regional Exchange Congress in suburban Oak Park, a longtime integrated community, to share ideas in a format so successful a national conference is planned in Cleveland in late 2002. An alliance with the Northern Illinois Planning Commission created a conference focusing on ways to balance economic development, zoning and occupancy issues. The Leadership Council helped sponsor events for administrators of high schools in south and west-side suburbs to learn about anti-bias programs.

- Access Living in Chicago created a self-advocacy curriculum for people with disabilities, reaching specifically fair housing advocates, college students, political and policy leaders in community forums, workshops, campuses, which was coupled with public education efforts to present more housing system choices in the hands of people with disabilities. Access Living also developed a rapid response system that mobilizes when community tensions arise because a person with disabilities moves into a neighborhood.

- In San Diego, the Fair Housing Council created a hate crimes rapid response team in partnership with a well-established San Diego coalition; held a community celebration, marking San Diego's ethnic diversity – Unity Fest 2001; produced "Hate Crimes in San Diego Are Unlawful" fliers in English and Spanish; and a hate crimes flow chart with the California Department of Justice linking all California fair housing centers to state resources.

In Phase Two, which began in December 2000, CommUNITY 2000 is building on its work in Boston, extending the program to the Triangle Region of North Carolina, and exporting Access Living's strategies to both sites.

II. INTRODUCTION

On September 11, 2001, a day terrorism shook the foundations of civil society, people of the United States were united by a vast range of emotions. One of the strongest of these was fear.

Those in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania literally feared for their lives. Others, whether in big cities, small towns or rural outposts, tasted the vague, overwhelming fear of a faceless enemy and a looming war.

And a small but significant group of U.S. residents knew the ugly, palpable fear of reprisals. Across the country, many Arab and Muslim Americans – anyone, in fact, with perceived similarities to the suspected terrorists – were justifiably concerned that their neighbors might turn on them.

Civil rights advocates and law enforcement officials shared their fears.

Fortunately, in several communities, those concerned about the rights and safety of Arab and Muslim Americans were able to act more decisively than ever before, thanks to CommUNITY 2000 – a national program designed to reduce, respond to, and reconcile community tensions.

CommUNITY 2000, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, originated in 1999. It is a collaboration between national and local groups that addresses tensions arising when people exercise their rights under the federal Fair Housing Act.

The project is divided into two Phases. Phase I began July 30, 1999 and ended December 31, 2001. Phase II began December 1, 2000 and will end in 2003.

Phase I of CommUNITY 2000 brought together the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF), the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) and local advocacy groups in Boston, Chicago and San Diego. This coalition spent untold hours working to reduce the sorts of tensions that, at their worst, lead to violence and hate crimes, as well as developing crucial relationships among people of good will who work to foster understanding and respect.

As a result, CommUNITY 2000's national and local partners were ready to move quickly when tragedy struck on September 11:

- Three days later, the Fair Housing Council of San Diego sent fliers, written in Arabic, to San Diego area organizations with ties to Arab and Islamic populations. The fliers explained state and federal laws protecting citizens from hate crimes, and encouraged people to contact the Council if they felt victimized. The Council also sent copies of the fliers to NFHA's more than 80 member organizations, suggesting they adapt and use the information. The Council was

prepared because months earlier it had used CommUNITY 2000 funds to translate the fliers into numerous Latino, Asian and African languages.

- On September 18, NFHA and LCCREF issued a press release to announce publication of their comprehensive handbook, "Fight Hate – A Prevention and Response Guide for America's Neighborhoods, " and a Rapid Response Strategy, Steps for Providing Immediate Assistance to Victims of Housing Related Hate Activity. Staff at NFHA spent the previous year preparing the manual, which helps community leaders, fair housing advocates, and others address housing-related hate crimes and tensions. The timing of its release allowed NFHA and LCCREF representatives to remind people of their rights under the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act during this critical period. Further, they took the opportunity to highlight NFHA's toll-free hotline as a resource for citizens, especially Arab Americans, to report housing-related hate activity.

- Many strong alliances were nurtured and fostered by the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, a CommUNITY 2000 Chicago partner. One such local advocacy network was RELATE -- Religious Leaders Acting Together for Equality. Among RELATE's objectives was to be able to respond swiftly and unanimously when citizens faced discrimination on Chicago's North Shore. Very shortly after September 11, RELATE issued a widely-distributed statement, which read, in part: "We also abhor the misguided acts of hatred against particular institutions in our communities, in the Chicago area and across the nation. We abhor the stereotype-based assumptions made about and actions taken against people of any particular faith tradition, ethicity, or nation of origin."

- Within weeks of September 11, an ad hoc group of Greater Boston civil rights, and community organizations and agencies released "Prejudice is not Patriotic: A Declaration of Respect." The short, succinct statement reaffirmed the patriotic duty of all Americans to safeguard the rights of their neighbors, regardless of their racial, religious or ethnic background. Andy Tarsy of the Massachusetts Anti-Defamation League convened the group, which included the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston (FHCGB), a CommUNITY 2000 partner. David Harris, director of the FHCGB, played an integral role in drafting the "Prejudice is not Patriotic" declaration. "He was always one of the leaders who insisted on the importance of getting the statement issued quickly and in the right way," Tarsy said of Harris.

Actions taken on behalf of Arab Americans following September 11 are merely the most dramatic examples of the myriad ways that CommUNITY 2000's local and national partners have joined forces to foster respect, understanding and harmony. Additional strategies for easing community tensions range from the tried-and-true to the innovative.

The two CommUNITY 2000 local partners in Chicago were among the most established in the field of fair housing nationwide. The Leadership Council, founded in 1966, is the country's oldest fair housing center. The second Chicago partner, Access Living, is one of the oldest centers for independent living for the disabled.

The Leadership Council used its affiliation with CommUNITY 2000 to enhance its proven existing programs while shifting focus to emphasize responding to, reducing, and reconciling neighborhood tensions.

At the other end of the spectrum, Access Living took the unprecedented position that the civil rights of the disabled were as likely to be violated in the government-subsidized group homes where many disabled persons reside as in their surrounding neighborhoods. Access Living thereby broadened CommUNITY 2000's definition of "community" to include the environment within the group homes themselves.

Whether responding to nationwide injustice, or a single incident of housing discrimination, the driving premise behind CommUNITY 2000 is the belief that when people of good will are unified, good will prevails.

For anyone interested in quelling community tensions and fostering safe, welcoming neighborhoods, the strategies that were developed by national and local partners for Phase I of CommUNITY 2000 can be replicated and duplicated in numerous ways across all sectors of American society.

What follows in this CommUNITY 2000 summary report is:

- A Menu of Strategies highlighting numerous ways in which the CommUNITY 2000 national and local partners worked to reduce, respond to and reconcile community tensions. The "Menu" can serve as both a resource and guide for anyone looking for ways to create more harmonious neighborhoods.
- Chapters that provide substantive details about local and national partners' contributions to the CommUNITY 2000 project.

III. CIVIL RIGHTS AND FAIR HOUSING TODAY

An Overview of Fair Housing in the 21st Century

The United States today is a more just country than it was 50 years ago. As a consequence of a largely successful civil rights revolution that attracted public attention in the 1960s, discrimination is illegal in education, employment, housing, voting, public accommodations and access to all federal programs.

On the other hand, incidents of community tension, discrimination and hate remain a part of American life. Efforts constantly are underway to undermine civil rights gains made over the past decades.

For example:

- Affirmative action, which has extended equal opportunities to qualified women and people of color for more than 25 years, is in jeopardy. Recent court decisions are effectively chipping away at it.

  "It is most frustrating to see the very means by which the evils of the past have been remedied being cast aside," said Hon. Nathaniel Jones, Chairman of the CommUNITY 2000 Advisory Board. "Any remedy, such as affirmative action, which takes race into account is being called 'reverse discrimination.'"

- Recent successful efforts to encourage law enforcement agencies and retail establishments to end institutionalized racial profiling have been undermined by the federal government's sanctioned racial profiling in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Hundreds of people with perceived ethnic similarities to the suspected terrorists have been taken into custody. The Bush Administration is backing measures to try these people by means of secretive military tribunals.

- In the last five years alone, the headlines contained numerous reports of hate crimes. An African American man in a small Texas town was tied to a truck and pulled to pieces by two white men, for no other reason than the color of his skin. A Wyoming college student was beaten and crucified on a fence because he was gay. A young member of an Illinois white power group went on a deadly shooting spree across two states, taking aim from his moving car at minorities and Jews.

- In 1988 people with disabilities finally were added to the Fair Housing Act as a protected class. Congress declared the amendment a "clear pronouncement of a national commitment to end the unnecessary exclusion of persons with [disabilities] from the American mainstream." Yet today more than two million disabled people live in institutions, according to a 1998 report commissioned by Disability Rights Advocates Inc. Many of these are forced to do so because of a shortage of accessible, affordable housing nationwide. For example, the Illinois Office of Long Term Care reported in 1999 that 4000 people with developmental disabilities were waiting to receive home and community based services that would allow them to live independently.

What Census 2000 Reveals

Against this backdrop of gains won and lost, figures from the 2000 Census indicate that we are a more diverse nation than we were 10 years ago.

These figures also indicate that we are not a more integrated nation – racially, ethnically or economically.

The number of Americans who identified themselves as white declined in 10 years, to 68 percent of the population from 75 percent. While the number of black Americans remained the same at 12 percent,

the country's Latino population increased to 13 percent from 9 percent. The Asian American population increased to 4 percent from 3 percent. The 2000 census also included a new option that allowed citizens to identify themselves as belonging to two or more races. Data indicate that 2 percent of the population did so.

Despite an increasingly diverse citizenry, most still live in areas that are largely segregated. For example, 2000 census data on the near and outlying suburbs of Boston show populations that remain largely segregated. Of 10 Boston suburbs, only three – Lawrence, Lowell and Lynn – somewhat reflect the diversity of the U.S. population at large. Approximately 34.10 percent of Lawrence's population is white, 59.7 percent Latino, with the rest of the population are black, Asian or multiracial. Lowell's population is approximately 62.5 percent white, 3.5 percent black, 16.5 percent Asian, 2.9 percent multiracial and 14 percent Latino. About 62.5 percent of Lynn's population is white, with the remaining population 9.2 percent black, 6.4 percent Asian, 3 percent multiracial and 18.4 percent Latino. The remaining seven suburbs are overwhelmingly white.

As for economic diversity, initial Census 2000 data on housing tenure (owner occupied vs. renter occupied housing units) can be used to approximate relative economic status of racial and ethnic groups. Renters generally are assumed to have lower incomes than owners. In the Chicago suburbs, for example, the vast majority of owner-occupied homes have white householders. In Cook County, about 60 percent of occupied homes are owned, while 40 percent are rented. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of owner-occupied homes have white householders, while less than one-fifth (18 percent) have African American householders. In contrast, only half of renter-occupied homes have white householders. One third (33 percent) of renter-occupied homes have African American householders. Asian householders are about as likely to own as to rent their homes. More African American, Latino, Asian and multiracial householders rent than own their homes in Cook County, while roughly twice as many white householders own their homes than rent. While Census 2000 data are not available on the housing tenure of people with disabilities, employment statistics from a Harris 2000 Survey of Americans with Disabilities show that only 32 percent of non-institutionalized people with disabilities (including group home residents) are employed. The survey also revealed that people with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty, with household incomes of $15,000 or less, than the general population (29 percent versus 10 percent).

As the current climate indicates and the data demonstrate, we have made great strides in the last 50 years toward fulfilling the promise of U.S. democracy, which guarantees the civil rights of everyone living in this country. But we have not yet succeeded.

One of these treasured rights is the freedom to choose where and with whom we want to live.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 and its subsequent amendments make it illegal to discriminate in housing related transactions because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or familial status (the presence in the home of children under the age of 18). Nonetheless, housing-related discrimination remains rampant.

Because of a long legacy of housing discrimination in the United States, many Americans have been raised in segregated communities, allowing them to nurture prejudices and fears. Often, when people who are different move into historically homogenous communities, their new neighbors automatically assume the worst. They worry their property values will decline or that crime rates will rise. This can create an environment in which community leaders feel free to circumvent the law, knowing the bulk of the population tacitly endorses them. Politicians pass ordinances limiting the number of people per home; landlords tell the "wrong" sort that a vacant apartment has been rented; and bankers practice predatory lending.

An environment where landlords, realtors, lenders, appraisers, politicians and neighbors disregard fair housing laws – or adhere to the letter of the law, but not its spirit – usually is fraught with tension, or the potential for violence. Sometimes it erupts when a vulnerable individual or group exercises their right to fair and affordable housing. Sometimes tension is a constant, always lurking just below the surface and taken for granted.

Unfortunately, tensions left simmering and unchecked can lead to hate crimes.

According to the FBI's most recent Hate Crimes Statistics Report, 8,063 bias-motivated incidents were reported in 2000, compared to 7,876 in 1999 and 7,775 in 1998. Of the total reported incidents, 4,337 were motivated by racial bias, 1,472 by religious bias, 1,299 by sexual orientation bias and 911 by ethnicity/national origin bias. There were also 36 crimes reported against disabled persons.

The number of hate crimes committed in 2000 represents a small number of crimes committed overall. But even one is too many. Hate crimes are acts of violence against the American ideal: that we can make one nation out of many different people. Horrific examples come to mind when people think of hate crimes, for example, the deaths of James Byrd in Texas and Matthew Shepard in Wyoming.

However, unpublicized hate crimes are committed and prosecuted in the United States every day, and too many occur near the place where individuals deserve to feel most secure – their homes. The FBI designated four categories to describe the leading locations where the 8,063 hate crimes committed in 2000 took place. They are: highway/road/ally/street (about 15 percent); parking lot/garage (about 5 percent); school/college (about 9 percent); and residence/home (the largest location at about 30 percent). These crimes occurred outside people's houses, on their streets, in their neighborhoods.

Those who work in the civil rights and fair housing fields also believe that incidents of housing-related hate crime are underreported, primarily for two reasons. First, law enforcement officials often mistakenly report housing-related hate incidents as vandalism or property crimes. Second, many of the victims either are too frightened or too unaware of their legal rights to protest.

Lea Rios and Hui Cai are examples of this second reason.

Lea is a tenant in the Old Colony housing project of South Boston, which was a whites only project until 1989. In the almost eight years that she has lived in Old Colony and been an advocate for minority tenants there, her car has been smashed and vandalized innumerable times by white youths. She knew her property was being damaged because she was an unwelcome minority, but it never occurred to her to report each incident by its real name – hate crime.

Cai and her family moved into a middle-class neighborhood in San Diego County in December 2000. From the beginning, they consistently were harassed and intimidated by a next door neighbor, who made clear that he did not like Chinese people. He even went so far as to file suit against the family because he was offended by the smell of Chinese food. Cai was loath to notify authorities for many months because the man frightened her.

These examples do not describe the norm in most U.S. neighborhoods. Hate incidents in housing are the exception rather than the rule. In many communities, integrative moves by minorities are met quietly with a spectrum of responses ranging from no reaction to warm welcome. What Lia and Cai's stories illustrate, however, is that beyond protecting victims and effectively enforcing fair housing laws, local leaders, civil rights advocates, law enforcement officials and all people of good will must work to change the environments of America's neighborhoods so that tensions do not fester.

CommUNITY 2000 is a national project specifically designed to prevent and respond to community tensions that arise when people exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act. It was created to help insure that people like Lea Rios and Hui Cai can live in peace wherever they choose.

IV. CommUNITY 2000: WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT?

Purposes of CommUNITY 2000: Developing, Documenting and Reporting

In 1992, outraged African American residents of Los Angeles stormed their city's streets, bent on destruction. In what would come to be known as "days of rage," the rioting mobs were reacting to a jury verdict that acquitted four white L.A. police officers in the brutal beating of Rodney King, a black man.

The burning city illuminated the racial woes of an entire country. People of every race and religion, every social and economic strata were pointing fingers and calling names. Amidst the cacophony, King asked, "Can we all get along?"

The question seemed sadly rhetorical – another way of reiterating that racial tension, discord and misunderstanding are tragic and inescapable facts of American life.

Implemented almost a decade later, CommUNITY 2000 is a national, federally funded project that takes the opposite view. In essence, it asks Rodney King's question in a profoundly different way: "How can we all get along?" Far from rhetorical, this question assumes positive, concrete solutions.

The CommUNITY 2000 concept is predicated on the belief that the United States is a nation of neighborhoods, and if its neighborhoods are places of peace, harmony and good will, its entire civic life will be so.

In order to have harmonious neighborhoods, however, people must be free to choose where and with whom they want to live. When they make their choices, their neighbors must accept them. Too often this does not happen. Instead, our inability to "get along" as a society takes root when people in communities – whether politicians, mortgage lenders, police officers, or neighbors – do not welcome or outright reject those perceived as different. In rare instances, simmering resentments can lead to the most egregious manifestation of tensions: hate crimes.

CommUNITY 2000 is a nationwide effort designed to prevent, respond to and reconcile tensions that arise when people make choices about where to live – in other words, when they exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act of 1968. It is a coalition of civil rights and fair housing organizations, both national and local. The coalition's goal is three-fold:

- To develop and implement a variety of specific strategies which foster good will in neighborhoods nationwide.
- To evaluate and document the processes and outcomes of those strategies.
- To compile a Menu of Strategies that details which programs were successful, and why. The Menu is available for use and adaptation by any person or group looking for ways to reduce tensions in their own neighborhoods. The Menu of Strategies is CommUNITY 2000's answer to the question, "Can we all get along?" It says, "Yes. Here's how."

Funding: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

In July 1999, officials from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF) and the National Fair Housing Alliance received a $1.5 million grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop and implement a nationwide "community tension reduction program." LCCREF was charged with administering the grant with the National Fair Housing Alliance as its major subcontractor. Working together, they developed the CommUNITY 2000 concept, with a strong emphasis on building coalitions and relationships at every level – national, regional and grassroots.

"We felt it was not enough to stress enforcement of the law," said Karen McGill Lawson, LCCREF's executive director. "We wanted to find out what the community can do to prevent tensions when newcomers come into the neighborhood, what it can do to proactively welcome newcomers, and when problems occur what should the response be?"

Phase I of CommUNITY 2000, which is detailed in this report, took place from July 1999 to December 2001. The partners involved in the first phase of the CommUNITY 2000 coalition were as follows:

- The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, a private non-profit organization dedicated to civil rights education and research. It strives to convey to the American public the progress made in civil rights, the continuing challenges and the strength that comes from being a diverse nation. LCCREF received slightly less than $650,000 of the $1.5 million grant.
- The National Fair Housing Alliance, a consortium of more than 80 private non-profit fair hous ing organizations across the United States. It has been promoting equal housing, lending and insurance opportunities through education, enforcement, training and research since 1988. The National Fair Housing Alliance received slightly more than $200,000.
- The National Advisory Board, an amalgam of 20 distinguished and diverse national experts in inter-group relations, hate crimes prevention, law enforcement, conflict resolution, civil rights, academia and media. It was formed specifically to offer advice and guidance to CommUNITY 2000's other national and local partners.
- The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston, founded in 1998, promotes equal housing opportunities for all people throughout the greater Boston area. The Center effectively operates by building relationships with and providing services to established organizations. The Fair Housing Center received slightly less than $300,000.
- The Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, in Chicago, has been a driving force in the fight for fair housing for more than 30 years. It has nationally recognized experi ence in implementing fair housing and affirmative action mobility programs. The Leadership Council received slightly more than $170,000.
- Access Living of Chicago is one of the oldest and largest independent living centers for people with disabilities in the country. The center focuses on community outreach and education, advocacy, community organizing and civil rights. The majority of the staff is disabled. Access Living received slightly more than $160,000.
- The Fair Housing Council of San Diego was established in 1989. The Council has developed comprehensive fair housing enforcement programs and provided technical assistance to housing industry professionals. It also offers public outreach and educational services. The San Diego Council received about $20,000.

Overview of Partners for First 18 Months

The CommUNITY 2000 local partners were chosen because they represented different geographic regions and, with the exception of the Greater Boston organization, had well-established fair housing centers. Each of the partners involved in Phase I, both national and local, faced their own unique challenges. Each partner received a different level of funding. Yet regardless of monies received, the partners met their challenges and developed solutions.

Each partner fulfilled the objectives that the architects of CommUNITY 2000 initially set forth. Each developed innovative approaches to help foster positive change in the civil rights and fair housing environments of their communities. Each was able to make a contribution to the Menu of Strategies.

V. BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH A MENU OF STRATEGIES

Accomplishments for Modeling by Organizations Nationwide

CommUNITY 2000 was designed so that its objectives would resonate well beyond the parameters of the project itself.

To that end, the CommUNITY 2000 partners' purpose in investing their time, effort and ingenuity in the project was two-fold: to prevent or respond to community tensions within their own spheres of influence, and to provide interested individuals and organizations with a variety of strategies adaptable to their particular circumstances.

What follows is the CommUNITY 2000 Menu of Strategies. It offers a thumbnail sketch of each successful tension-reduction plan implemented during the two-year project, and a brief explanation of why, generally speaking, the strategy worked.

This Menu is meant to serve as a tool for anyone seeking effective ways to reduce, respond to or reconcile tensions.*

Successful Strategies: The National Partners

Most groups utilizing this Menu are neither interested in nor equipped to implement tension reduction strategies on a national scale. Nonetheless, CommUNITY 2000's national partners (the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the National Fair Housing Alliance) were effective in two areas essential for any successful effort, no matter its size or scope. These areas are (1) building coalitions and (2) disseminating information.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF)

Coalitions

Three times during the first phase of the CommUNITY 2000 project, the Leadership Conference on Civil

* For further information on the project itself or specific strategies, please refer to the contact information that follows the Menu.

Rights Education Fund convened meetings of the local and national partners in Washington, D.C., and brought in experts in both the civil rights and fair housing arenas to exchange ideas. LCCREF also brought together the Advisory Board members for much the same purpose, on two separate occasions. Furthermore, LCCREF staff was regularly in contact with the local partners throughout the course of the project, providing technical support and national perspective.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund was firmly invested in the idea that developing relationships, networks and coalitions among those with a vested interest in fair housing and civil rights issues would serve as a powerful force for generating ideas and empowering all involved. This proven strategy can be applied to any group seeking to affect change, whether the beleaguered tenants in a public housing unit or a collection of statewide law enforcement agencies.

Information

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund is at the forefront among civil rights groups in its use of technology to advance social change. By developing a comprehensive web site (www.community2000online.org) for the CommUNITY 2000 project, LCCREF was able to disseminate resources and training materials immediately to a wide audience. The web site also gave communities, civil rights groups, fair housing organizations and all parties interested in the CommUNITY 2000 agenda the ability to interact quickly and effectively.

LCCREF's strategy of creating an enticing, highly interactive Internet site was one adopted by the local partners, and with great success. An Internet presence quickly is becoming mandatory for all organizations and with good reason. It is an effective, relatively inexpensive communications tool.

In addition, LCCREF created local tag lines for public service announcements developed with the Ad Council, which generated approximately $145,000 in free air time.

LCCREF also examined the civil rights/fair housing climate in 10 cities that were not CommUNITY 2000 partners. The goal was twofold:

1. Assess how effectively fair housing groups around the country reacted when faced with housing-related community tensions.
2. Learn the extent to which these groups formed coalitions or partnerships to address community tensions.

LCCREF called the process and the report that the staff ultimately produced an "environmental scan."

Of the 10 cities studied, the scan determined that the fair housing center in Cincinnati, Ohio – Housing Opportunities Made Easy (HOME) – was the only one leading efforts to prevent and respond to community tensions. Most fair housing centers merely referred complaints to the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development for investigation, and did little to help the victim or educate the community.

HOME, led by Executive Director Karla Irvine, undertakes a successful four-part strategy each time a victim of housing discrimination files a complaint:

1. Visit the victim
2. Alert the media, with the victim's permission
3. Contact the police
4. Contact advocates who will speak on behalf of the victim and the community

The National Fair Housing Alliance

Coalitions

The name alone says it all. The National Fair Housing Alliance is, first and foremost, a coalition – the hub of a wheel that counts as its spokes more than 80 fair housing centers across the nation. The Alliance not only advocates for its member organizations, it also keeps them apprised of the latest news and information concerning fair housing issues and civil rights issues related to fair housing.

For any group interested in furthering the community tension reduction agenda, the National Fair Housing Alliance is an invaluable resource. It will put organizations or individuals in touch with their nearest fair housing center or provide strategies and support if that center is unresponsive. Check out NFHA's web site at www.nationalfairhousing.com.

Information

One of the National Fair Housing Alliance's primary achievements over the course of the CommUNITY 2000 project was the creation and dissemination of its manual, "Fight Hate: A Prevention and Response Guide for America's Neighborhoods," and its checklist, "Fight Hate: A Rapid Response Strategy."

Both are full-color, user-friendly booklets. The "Prevention and Response Guide" offers concrete, step-by-step instructions for preventing and responding to neighborhood tensions. It explains the connection between fair housing tensions and hate crimes, clarifies legal rights and responsibilities, outlines effective community responses and describes ways to help victims of hate crimes. The "Rapid Response Strategy" is a thorough checklist for developing community responses to tensions and possible hate crimes.

For anyone wondering, "Where do we start?" these manuals provide the answer. They are available from NFHA. The organization's number and address are listed following the Menu of Strategies.

Successful Strategies: Local Partners

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston

Increasing Tenant Involvement in South Boston's Public Housing

- *Providing Resources to Minority Tenant Activists*
  One of the first areas in which the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston made inroads was South Boston, which had been a segregated, predominantly white area of the city with a history of resisting desegregation. Fair Housing Center Executive Director David Harris attended police task force meetings for Boston Public Housing residents, where he met Lea Rios, a tenant organizer from the Old Colony Project. Harris served as a resource for Rios in her efforts to reorganize Old Colony's tenant task force to include legitimate minority representation.
  Harris believes he was able to provide Rios with substantive resources because he spent months on a "listening tour" before offering support. This strategy was in keeping with Greater Boston Fair Housing's "ground-up approach." As a new organization, the Center and its leaders believed the best way to help was to learn first.

- *Enhancing the work of FANS*
  Ginny Hamilton-Ashe of the Fair Housing Center made a connection with Families Advocating Neighborhood Strength (FANS), a South Boston community coalition working to address the needs of low-income families.
  By reaching out to FANS and becoming affiliated with it, Hamilton-Ashe is able to keep the group focused on fair housing and race issues.

Active Participation in the Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition

On behalf of the Fair Housing Center, David Harris is co-chair of the Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition, a network of civil rights groups that meets regularly to exchange ideas and provide support for individual objectives and common goals.

Through active involvement with a region-wide coalition of civil rights groups, Harris has both enhanced the Center's work and brought a housing focus to the range of its civil rights issues. This strategy of forming and/or working with coalitions whenever possible empowers all organizations involved, many of which are under-funded and under-staffed.

"We Don't Want Your Kind Living Here"

On April 24, 2001, the Fair Housing Center released "We Don't Want Your Kind Living Here," a 30-page report on discrimination in the Greater Boston rental market. The Center conducted extensive in-person and telephone testing in four Boston neighborhoods and 12 communities bordering the city. Results revealed that more than 50 percent of testers were discriminated against.

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston produced concrete proof that discrimination in Greater Boston's rental market was widespread. The report was thorough, extensive and professionally conducted. It was a factual indictment and generated wide media coverage.

Fighting Discriminatory Rental Advertisements

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston negotiated a court settlement in early July 2001 with The Boston Globe, which had been illegally publishing discriminatory rental advertisements. The landlords who placed the ads were overtly or covertly discouraging applicants with children or federal subsidies from renting, a practice that is illegal. The federally-enforceable agreement which was put into place as a result of the Fair Housing Center's legal action requires training, education and policy changes at the Globe.

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston was a fledgling fair housing center operating in a metropolitan area where the powers-that-be were either dismissive or ignorant of federal fair housing laws. While the primary focus of CommUNITY 2000 was on changing community attitudes rather than enforcement, the Greater Boston organization needed to do both. As the Boston Globe lawsuit illustrates, the Fair Housing Center put Greater Boston on notice: We're here and we're watching.

The Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities

Congregations Building CommUNITY

The Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities and its co-sponsor, the National Conference for Community and Justice, brought together more than 200 congregations throughout the Chicago area to participate in "Congregations Building CommUNITY." Religious leaders agreed to set aside the weekend of March 31-April 2, 2000, to address their congregations' moral obligation to promote fair housing and racial justice.

The event was so successful that the Leadership Council and other organizers reconvened "Congregations Building CommUNITY" as a federation for faith-based groups involved in housing and racial justice issues.

The following year, the weekend of April 29-May 1, was set aside for "Congregations Building Community" activities. Diverse local events were held throughout the region, as well as a central event celebrating faith-based activism for fair and affordable housing. The latter brought together activists, lay people and religious leaders.

By reconnecting with the Chicago area's religious leaders, the Leadership Council was able to reawaken enthusiasm for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s premise that people of faith must be committed to open, accessible, diverse neighborhoods.

The Lake County Anti-Hate Crimes Task Force

After the Lake County State's Attorney publicly expressed interest in examining the county's approach to fighting hate crimes, the Leadership Council and its subcontracting local partners began working with organizations in Lake County to form an anti-hate crimes task force.

Despite difficulty building local leadership, the two-year effort resulted in a broad coalition of agencies and actors committed to working on hate crimes and other bias issues. The task force continues to work together, has staged three workshops on hate crimes, and is planning for a year-long education and organizing effort with Partners Against Hate, a collaborative initiative of LCCREF, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence.

Formation of the task force was successful on balance because the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities' strategy has been to stay the course. The Leadership Council and its CommUNITY 2000 subcontracting local partners have made a commitment to keep the task force operating as an educational and capacity building organization.

Immigrant Fair Housing Roundtable

Aware that immigrant groups in the Chicago area experience many tensions around housing issues, the Leadership Council convened the Immigrant Fair Housing Roundtable in the fall of 1999. It brought immigrant service and advocacy organizations together with fair housing organizations to address the fair housing needs of the Chicago region's growing immigrant population. The roundtable produced a fair housing resource guide for organizations working with immigrants, and identified code enforcement policies and practices that municipalities use to harass immigrants.

This is an excellent example of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities exercising its ability to build coalitions region-wide. By bringing fair housing and immigrant groups together regularly, the Leadership Council ensured that participants could develop productive relationships.

Regional Exchange Congress in Oak Park

The Leadership Council convened the Regional Exchange Congress in Oak Park the weekend of September 20-21, 2000. It brought together leaders from stable and diverse communities with those struggling with growing diversity. It enabled them to share a wealth of information through a series of panel discussions.

The Leadership Council's innovative strategy was to take a tested idea and build on it. For many years beginning in the late 1970s, the Oak Park Exchange Congress (Oak Park is an integrated suburb of Chicago) brought together diverse communities from around the country to share ideas and develop relationships. The Leadership Council adjusted the format to address issues concerning communities in the region. The success of the conference has led to planning for a national conference that will be held in Cleveland in Fall 2002.

Meeting the Challenges of Diversity Conference

The Leadership Council and the Northern Illinois Planning Commission co-sponsored the Meeting the Challenges of Diversity Conference on April 7, 2000. It explored ways for public officials to balance the economic, development, zoning and occupancy interests of municipalities with the fair housing rights of an increasingly diverse population.

In this case, the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, with its extensive history and reputation in the Chicago area, was able to make the most of its relationships outside the world of fair housing and civil rights. The Council enhanced these connections by joining with an organization such as the Northern Illinois Planning Commission. Establishing partnerships with regional planning groups helps build relationships, and focus increased attention on planning equitably for a diverse population.

Education Outreach

The Leadership Council helped sponsor events for administrators of high schools in Chicago's south and west suburbs to learn about anti-bias programs. The two events attracted several dozen administrators; a handful of these adopted anti-discrimination training programs for their students and/or staffs.

The modest success of this event demonstrates the importance of using creative approaches to reach new audiences on fair housing and community tension reduction issues. Helping to create anti-discrimination programs in even a handful of schools can serve as a foundation for more intensive efforts down the road.

Access Living

A Self-Advocacy Curriculum for People with Disabilities

In a wholly innovative approach to advancing the fair housing rights of people with disabilities, Access Living developed a self-advocacy curriculum to help disabled individuals better understand and exercise their housing rights.

The Olmstead decision is a 1999 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that challenges Federal, state and local governments to develop more opportunities for persons with disabilities. The decision interprets the Americans with Disabilities Act to require states to administer their services, programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Access Living contends that group homes often operate in ways that run counter to the Olmstead decision because residents are forced to agree to restrictive conditions in exchange for housing. Residents accept these conditions because they do not know their rights.

Access Living not only taught self-advocacy to groups of disabled people, but also trained them as peer-to-peer instructors. Access Living then arranged for these instructors to conduct self-advocacy training sessions in group homes throughout the Chicago area.

The strength of Access Living's strategy was its willingness to propose and then execute unorthodox solutions to fair housing issues facing the disabled. Access Living was not afraid to challenge the status quo. After two years of implementing its innovative approach as a CommUNITY 2000 partner, Access Living is beginning to change notions about fair housing for the disabled, not only in Chicago but elsewhere across the country.

Educating the Population At Large

Access Living reinforced its self-advocacy curriculum for the disabled by educating the following groups:

- Fair Housing Advocates.
  Access Living hosted a series of community forums to teach them about the needs and rights of people with disabilities. Many advocates automatically assumed that group home providers spoke on behalf of group home residents. Housing advocates further assumed that group home situations were beneficial, and they did not know about alternatives.

- College Students.
  Access Living conducted housing workshops in those university and college classes that teach disability-related curricula on why current living situations for the disabled often are oppressive.

- Politicians and Policy Makers.
  Access Living organized a grassroots lobbying effort to push lawmakers to revamp the existing housing system so that the disabled are in control of their living choices, and are not forced to accept certain services in exchange for a place to live.

Access Living was working toward systemic change in the way society at large views the fair housing rights of the disabled. Therefore, it looked for ways to influence any group that could have a role in affecting change.

A Rapid Response System

Access Living developed a rapid response system – a plan for reacting quickly when community tensions arise – that aids disabled persons who feel threatened, no matter their living situation. Access Living's rapid response system mobilizes when community tensions arise because a person with disabilities moves into a neighborhood. Regarding group homes, Access Living also executes its rapid response system when a group home resident experiences tensions within the home itself. If neighborhood tensions involve a group home, Access Living stipulates that it will use the rapid response system only if a resident of a group home feels threatened, not a group home provider.

Ever mindful of its ultimate goal to help the disabled population become as independent as possible, Access Living designed its rapid response system to further that goal.

The Fair Housing Council of San Diego

A Rapid Response Team

The Fair Housing Council of San Diego set the stage for creation of a rapid response team by becoming a member of the San Diego Regional Hate Crimes Coalition. Eventually the FHCSD was able to transform a subcommittee of this group into a rapid response team, which focused its efforts on the kinds of housing-related tensions that can lead to hate crimes.

By the end of the second year of CommUNITY 2000, this coalition of civil rights and legal activists established an email network that continues to serve as an effective rapid response tool. Here's how it works: A coalition member becomes aware that someone in the San Diego area is experiencing housing-related harassment or discrimination. The member notifies others in the email network; they quickly exchange information, then act.

The Fair Housing Council's strategy for forming a rapid response team worked because Director Mary Scott Knoll developed a mutually beneficial relationship with a well-established San Diego coalition. The FHCSD was spared the considerable time and effort of forming its own coalition. The coalition gained critical insight from the FHCSD's housing perspective.

Unity Fest 2001

Held March 27-28, 2001, Unity Fest featured dance, musical and theatrical performances by numerous groups representing San Diego's ethnic diversity. Unity Fest 2001 attracted the attention of a civil rights group in northern San Diego County, which is joining forces with the council for a Unity Fest 2002 celebration.

Despite modest attendance, Unity Fest attracted considerable attention from those who took part because it was a positive, celebratory event. The Council demonstrated that fostering good will and diversity in communities wasn't just a moral and social obligation. Fostering diversity also could be culturally enriching and a lot of fun.

"Hate Crimes in Housing Are Unlawful" Flyers

The Council produced informational flyers, titled "Hate Crimes in Housing Are Unlawful," in English and Spanish as well as several different Asian and African languages. These were distributed to buyers, renters, real estate professionals, community organizations, churches, synagogues and mosques.

As part of its strategy to educate people about their housing rights and responsibilities, the Council was determined to produce and distribute material to those least likely to understand or report hate crimes. Recipients welcomed the flyers, which also became another rapid response tool for the Council.

Hate Crimes Flow Chart

The Council collaborated with the California Department of Justice to develop a statewide hate crimes flow chart that links all California fair housing centers to state resources.

One of the Council's goals was to improve the flow and distribution of information among groups that essentially were working toward the same ends. The hate crimes flow chart furthered that goal.

For more information, contact:

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund

1629 K Street, NW, 10th floor
Washington, DC 20006
http://www.civilrights.org
http://www.community2000online.org
202.466.3434 main

National Fair Housing Alliance

1212 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 525
Washington, DC 20005
http://www.nationalfairhousing.org
202.898.1661 main

Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston

59 Temple Place, Suite 1105
Boston, MA 02111
http://boston.fairhousing.com/
617.399.0491 main

Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities

111 West Jackson Blvd., 12th floor
Chicago, IL 60604
http://www.lcmoc.org/
312.341.5678 main

Access Living

614 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60607
312.253.7000 main
312.253.7001 TTY

Fair Housing Council of San Diego

625 Broadway, Suite 1114
San Diego, CA 92101
619.699.5888 main

VI. THE NATIONAL PARTNERS

Building Community Throughout the Country

CommUNITY 2000, the first comprehensive program to develop a national model for preventing and responding to community tensions, could not have happened without committed leadership. The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF) and the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) were uniquely qualified to provide it.

LCCREF is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to civil rights education and research. It informs the public about the progress made in civil rights and inter-group relations, the continuing challenges and the strength of the country's diversity. LCCREF is closely affiliated with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the nation's oldest, largest and most diverse civil rights coalition.

The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), a consortium of more than 80 private non-profit fair housing organizations, promotes equal housing, lending and insurance opportunities through education, enforcement, training and research.

"LCCREF and NFHA were an ideal partnership for this project," said Wade Henderson, Executive Director of LCCR. "NFHA provided the fair housing perspective for LCCREF's expertise in research and education."

By joining forces, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the National Fair Housing Alliance were able to ensure that CommUNITY 2000 maintained its fair housing focus, and developed appropriate programs to address the negative responses (from tensions to hate crimes) that can result when people exercise their rights under the Fair Housing Act.

"The [CommUNITY 2000] project became necessary because HUD and fair housing groups had begun to realize that they were focused on enforcement of fair housing laws, but not paying attention to the consequences of enforcement," said Corrine Yu, who was named national program director of CommUNITY 2000 in August 1999. "There was no mechanism to address what happened when neighbors did not welcome a new family."

"Before CommUNITY 2000, what existed in terms of prevention existed solely in the civil rights arena, not the fair housing arena," said Karen McGill Lawson, Executive Director of LCCREF. "What this project did was hopefully make fair housing activists look at the longer term impact of their work. Tensions happen because of where people live."

Together, the staffs of LCCREF and NFHA conceived and designed CommUNITY 2000, building the engine that made the project run. They focused their energies in two areas in particular: disseminating information and building coalitions.

To that end, their organizations brought together some of the most well-respected names in the civil rights and fair housing arenas to form the CommUNITY 2000 National Advisory Board. Its members lent considerable expertise and prestige to the endeavor, and provided the local and national partners with valuable information and advice as the project moved forward.

The national advisory board functioned as the third member in a triumvirate that guided CommUNITY 2000 at the national level.

The project was divided into two phases, the first of which ran from July 1999 to December 2001. What follows is a description of the numerous contributions each national partner made to the successes of the first phase of CommUNITY 2000.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund

In July 1999, the Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund a $1.5 million "Community Tensions Project" grant. The funds were to be used to develop and implement a national project that addressed community tensions related to persons exercising their rights under the Fair Housing Act.

LCCREF was charged with administering the grant, and the project was dubbed "CommUNITY 2000." For Phase I of the project, LCCREF entered into contractual agreements with the National Fair Housing Alliance as its national partner; and the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities (Chicago), Access Living (Chicago), The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston and the Fair Housing Council of San Diego as its local partners.

Besides fulfilling its considerable administrative responsibilities, LCCREF accomplished the following during the course of Phase I:

Environmental Scan

LCCREF closely examined the civil rights/fair housing climate in 10 cities that were not CommUNITY 2000 partners. The goal was twofold. First, LCCREF wanted to assess how effectively fair housing groups around the country reacted when faced with housing-related community tensions. Secondly, LCCREF wanted to learn the extent to which these fair housing groups formed coalitions or partnerships to address community tensions. LCCREF called the process and the report that its staff ultimately produced an "environmental scan."

The scan focused on the following cities: Atlanta, GA; Durham, NC; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; New Orleans, LA; Omaha, NE; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; Richmond, VA, and Cincinnati, OH. These cities were chosen because they had affiliate chapters of the National Conference of Community and Justice and National Fair Housing Alliance; because they were listed among the top 50 segregated metropolitan areas in the country; and because each had experienced recent, high profile, racially charged incidents.

Of the 10 cities studied, the scan determined that the fair housing center in Cincinnati was the only one leading efforts to prevent and respond to community tensions. (For more information on Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) in Cincinnati, refer to the Menu of Strategies listed earlier). More typically, fair housing centers in the other cities simply referred discrimination cases to HUD for investigation, and did little to help the victim or the community.

LCCREF staff members who conducted the scan also looked for patterns in the types of coalitions that the fair housing and civil rights leaders in these cities formed. Staff studied specific reasons why coalitions were able to form, and similarities that prevented coalitions from forming in areas that appeared ripe for a coalition to exist.

Information

LCCREF developed a comprehensive website for the CommUNITY 2000 project, which enabled it to disseminate resources and training materials to a wide audience. The web site also gave communities, civil rights groups, fair housing organizations and all parties interested in the CommUNITY 2000 agenda the ability to interact quickly and effectively.

"The web site serves as a forum for fair housing and civil rights groups all over the country," said Anika Penn, national program coordinator for Phase I. "And it provides a way for anyone to be able to get a blueprint for resolving community tensions."

LCCREF constructed an internal website, or "Intranet," for the CommUNITY 2000 project. It is a secure site that allows national and local partners to communicate electronically, and submit their quarterly reports to HUD.

The organization also provided several "offline" resources to the project, including its own publications such as "Cause for Concern: Hate Crimes in America." Working with the Ad Council, LCCREF distributed radio public service announcements nationwide to promote the project; in the three project sites, these spots included local tag lines about the local partners, and generated approximately $145,000 in free air time.

In addition, two resources have been distributed through local NFHA affiliates as well as through the web site: "Preventing Hate, Promoting Respect " (a CD Rom Tool and Manual containing strategies to help students address issues of diversity and bias) and a Fair Housing Lesson Plan to help students understand the importance of fair housing.

LCCREF also produced a CommUNITY 2000 informational brochure, which contained information about the project, and its national and local partners.

Monitoring and Planning

Along with the National Fair Housing Alliance, LCCREF monitored the project through frequent contact with the local partners via telephone and the Internet. Further, the national partners made regular visits to the local sites, and planned several meetings, held in Washington, D.C., with the local partners and National Advisory Board members (the latter group at LCCREF expense).

A deliberate planning process (culminating in the approval of site-specific project plans) and consistent contact among all the partners moved the project forward as a cohesive whole, and also allowed everyone to adjust and alter their strategies as the need arose.

"We deliberately took a flexible and fluid approach, as we knew the model would evolve over time as we learned more about how the local communities needs could best be met within a national framework," Corrine Yu said.

For example, LCCREF adjusted the timetable for training local rapid response teams because local sites wanted time to implement components of their prevention strategies before finalizing the rapid response teams.

To enhance its fair housing partners' ability to address community tension prevention and response, LCCREF also delivered technical assistance and training through training sessions in Washington, D.C., conducted by national experts. Topics covered included media outreach and public relations; school hate crime prevention programs; crisis response protocols and other promising approaches; coalition building; and advanced technology applications.

Evaluations

Early in Phase I of CommUNITY 2000, LCCREF recognized the need to evaluate the project and took steps to do so.

LCCREF contracted with Philip Nyden and Joe Hoereth of the Center for Urban Research and Learning at Loyola University of Chicago to evaluate the work of the Leadership Council and Access Living in Chicago, and with Kristina Hals, the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston.

Juliet Saltman, a CommUNITY 2000 National Advisory Board member and a former sociology professor at Kent State University in Ohio, evaluated the work of the Fair Housing Center in San Diego. Saltman now lives in the San Diego area.

Apart from the San Diego evaluation itself, one of Saltman's recommendations was that, for any and all future CommUNITY 2000 endeavors, the evaluation process needed to be built into the project before it started. LCCREF agreed.

The National Fair Housing Alliance

The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) is, first and foremost, a coalition of fair housing groups. Since its inception in 1988, it has been regularly disseminating information to its member organizations to help them advocate and operate more effectively.

Given its expertise in fair housing coalition-building and its contacts within the housing industry, NFHA was able to greatly enhance CommUNITY 2000's effectiveness.

"We were very focused on making sure that the knowledge we were accumulating about how to fight hate and respond to community tensions was going to get out to as many organizations as possible," said Kathy Fletcher, director of member services for NFHA. "What was the point if others couldn't take what we'd learned during the CommUNITY 2000 project and make the most of it?"

Throughout the course of CommUNITY 2000 Phase I, the National Fair Housing Alliance utilized its considerable strengths in the following ways:

"Fight Hate" Manuals

One its primary achievements during Phase I was the creation and dissemination of its "Fight Hate: A Prevention and Response Guide for America's Neighborhoods" manual, and its "Fight Hate: A Rapid Response Strategy" checklist. Both are full-color, user-friendly booklets.

The "Prevention and Response Guide" offers concrete, practical advice and instructions for preventing and responding to neighborhood tensions. It explains:

- What a hate crime is
- The relationship between housing-related hate activity and housing discrimination
- Federal Fair Housing laws
- How to respond to housing-related hate activity.
- How to help victims

The "Rapid Response Strategy," intended for use in conjunction with the "Prevention and Response Guide," is a thorough checklist for developing community responses to tensions and possible hate crimes.

The National Fair Housing Alliance not only developed the booklets, its staff also developed a media campaign to ensure that the manuals were distributed to as many interested organizations as possible.

"The national and local partners spent untold hours trying to understand the roots and reasons for housing-related hate crimes, and then working to prevent them," said Shanna Smith, NFHA's executive director. "Not everyone interested in fighting these problems is going to have that kind of time and resources. Most people don't know how to fight hate crimes, even in the fair housing arena, not to mention the political arena and law enforcement. These manuals are concrete guides to help them understand what we learned and replicate it, so that they don't have to reinvent the wheel."

Brochure

NFHA drafted a full-color brochure, ultimately produced by LCCREF, that contained:

- A brief explanation of CommUNITY 2000
- Thumbnail sketches of the national and local partners
- Lists of contact names and numbers, and resources
- A "Call To Action," encouraging people to actively work toward harmonious neighborhoods.

Monitoring and Planning

Along with LCCREF, NFHA monitored the project through frequent contact with the local partners via telephone and the Internet. Further, the national partners made regular visits to the local sites, and planned several meetings, held in Washington, D.C., with the local partners and National Advisory Board members.

The National Advisory Board

The National Advisory Board brought a wealth of knowledge, experience and national perspective to the project. Because of the stature of many of the members, the board also was a repository for an outstanding network of contacts in the civil rights and fair housing arenas and beyond.

Board members made these contacts available to the national and local partners, giving them additional help in addressing community tensions associated with fair housing rights.

Roster

The Advisory Board members were:

- Honorable Nathaniel Jones, National Advisory Board chairman, and Federal Judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.
- Ronald Chisom, executive director and co-founder of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond.

- David Eisner, vice president of America Online's Corporate Relations Department and the AOL Foundation.
- William Johnston, former senior associate for police and community programming for Facing History and Ourselves in Brookline, Mass., and a 31-year veteran of the Boston Police Department.
- Dan Kessler, executive director of the Birmingham Independent Living Center in Birmingham, AL.
- Dr. Jack Levin, Brudnick Professor of Sociology and Criminology and Director of the Brudnick Center on Conflict and Violence at Northeastern University.
- Michael Lieberman, Washington counsel for the Anti-Defamation League since 1989.
- Moises Loza, executive director of the Housing Assistance Council.
- Zixta Martinez worked on behalf of the National Fair Housing Alliance from 1995-1999.
- Bernadette Morris, co-owner and founder of Sonshine Communications.
- Rose Ochi, former director of the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Department of Justice.
- Gary Orfield, professor of education and social policy at Harvard University, teaching in the Graduate School of Education and The Kennedy School of Government.
- Robert Pike, executive vice president of the Allstate Insurance Companies in Northbrook, IL.
- Juliet Saltman, professor emerita of sociology at Kent State University, from which she retired in 1987.
- Mary Scott Knoll, executive director of the Fair Housing Council of San Diego.
- Madeleine Trichel, executive director of the Interfaith Center for Peace.
- Mary Ann Viverette, chief of the Gaithersburg, Maryland Police Department.
- Stephen Wessler, director for the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence at the University of Southern Maine.
- Clarence Wood, director and chief executive officer of the Chicago Community Trust Human Relations Task Force.
- Barry Zigas, executive director of Fannie Mae's housing impact division.

Comments of the Board Members

What follows are the perspectives of a few of the National Advisory Board members as they reflected on their impressions of the first phase of CommUNITY 2000:

Honorable Nathaniel Jones, National Advisory Board Chairman:

"Community 2000 was a means of reaching people to significantly change attitudes. Whether we're talking about housing, churches, schools or the justice system, this project provides a means of touching people, of giving them information to help them understand.

"In addition to consent decrees and mandates, you have to reach people so that they will become advocates. If people are educated in racial cocoons they are ill equipped to function in the real world. CommUNITY 2000 goes at it from the ground up so that people will take an expanded view.

"As for the Advisory Board, we provided a reinforcing effect for those who were, more or less, in the trenches. Meeting with us gave the local partners an opportunity to come up out of the trenches, step back and see how they fit into a broader picture."

Madeleine Trichel:

"I felt the Advisory Board was underutilized. I felt we could have been used more frequently to educate other people. But the projects that CommUNITY 2000 funded have done wonderful work.

"This was a great project. I would love to see it continued and spread to more cities."

Michael Lieberman:

"In the fair housing field, CommUNITY 2000 filled a void. I'm not aware of any other projects like it. When people think about housing, they don't think about hate crimes.

"Now, CommUNITY 2000 is open to the charge that, with the exception of the website, there is a little too much focus on hate crimes and not enough on specific housing-related programs. Also, did CommUNITY 2000 successfully answer the question, 'What's unique about housing-related hate crimes? What's unique about community tensions in a housing context?'

"These are legitimate questions. But the fact is that this project put housing related hate crimes on the map. You can't really criticize the project for being a trailblazer."

Gary Orfield:

"HUD gave the CommUNITY 2000 project modest support for a limited time to figure out how to solve problems of neighborhood race relations that have been deeply rooted in our cities since the great African American and Latino migrations.

"Though residential segregation is at the very root of inequality in a society where 80 percent of people live in metropolitan areas, there has never been a large, sustained investment of resources in its eradication."

Steve Wessler:

"What CommUNITY 2000 did was focus attention on hate crimes in an area where there is not normally a focus. I know from years of work in the prevention of hate violence that a very large number of hate crimes occur in neighborhoods. CommUNITY 2000 acknowledges that fact for the first time."

VII. THE FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF GREATER BOSTON

Building Community from the Ground Up

As a CommUNITY 2000 partner, the first thing that the staff of Boston's fledgling Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston did was to listen.

"We wanted to take a ground-up approach, not a top-down approach," said David Harris, the housing center's executive director. "We didn't want to come in from the outside acting like we had all the answers. Instead we wanted to be of assistance to people already working on fair housing. So we started with a 'listening tour.' "

Harris and the housing center's deputy director, Ginny Hamilton-Ashé, began with the premise that the best way to help was to learn. So they listened. They developed relationships. Then they began to make a difference.

By the end of Phase I of CommUNITY 2000, the housing center was becoming part of the solution in a region centered around a city with a long history of intransigent racial segregation and discord.

The Boston Housing Authority had long resisted the spirit of integration, which was the primary reason CommUNITY 2000 chose Boston as partner. The city's public housing was segregated from the time the first units were built in the 1930s until 1989. That was the year the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the NAACP won a lawsuit against the housing authority that resulted in a desegregation agreement, according to Nadine Cohen, an attorney with the Boston Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, who represented the NAACP.

Unfortunately, settlement of the desegregation suit did not end discrimination in Boston's public housing. "From 1989 through the early 1990s, as more people of color were moving into previously all-white communities in South Boston and Charlestown, the level of racial harassment and violence against them was increasing," Cohen said. "In 1996, the Lawyers' Committee brought a second lawsuit, alleging that tenants of color remained unable to live free from harassment."

The suit ultimately was settled in favor of the tenants. As part of that settlement, the federal court recommended that the Boston Housing Authority take certain steps to end segregation. One of these was participation in a program to ease community tensions. Consequently, officials at HUD felt that Boston was an ideal partner for the CommUNITY 2000 project.

In 1998, at around the same time that the idea for the project that ultimately became CommUNITY 2000 was taking shape in Washington, a steering committee of civil rights and housing professionals in the greater Boston area founded the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston. Until then, the Boston

Lawyers' Committee had been leading efforts to end illegal housing discrimination, and Boston was the only major metropolitan area in the United States without an independent fair housing center.

David Harris was hired as the new organization's director in March 1998. He was just beginning to make inroads into Boston's network of civil rights organizations when CommUNITY 2000 selected Boston as one of its local partners. CommUNITY 2000, which was committed to working through local fair housing centers, enhanced the work of the housing center in two important ways:

1. It gave the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston an agenda that stressed preventing community tensions as well as enforcing fair housing laws.
2. It provided the necessary funding for the housing center to make an immediate impact.

"By having the CommUNITY 2000 mission constantly before us, we took a different approach than we would have otherwise," said Ginny Hamilton-Ashé, one of the housing center's first full-time staff members. "Instead of dealing with individual situations as they came along, we took a more holistic approach, making sure that we were helping others tackle fair housing issues by expanding their capacity and dealing with systemic problems."

"We received our first funding (from CommUNITY 2000) in September 1999, and that's when we really took off," Harris said. "We were able to hire Ginny as the full-time CommUNITY 2000 program director, get office space, get a computer. It made a huge difference."

One of the first areas in which the Fair Housing Center began making inroads was South Boston, which had been a segregated, predominantly white area of the city with a history of resisting desegregation efforts. Despite past efforts – both nominal and good faith – to integrate the neighborhood, white resistance persisted through the 1990s. The end of rent control, recently escalating home values, and the region's extreme lack of affordable housing have exacerbated matters such that housing-related tensions have surfaced throughout the city. This is despite recent efforts by various agencies and organizations to prevent them.

It was in this tinderbox environment that Harris met Lea Rios early in 2000. A resident of South Boston's Old Colony project, Rios was one of the few tenants of color who was speaking out about the continual harassment she felt she and other tenants of color were subjected to. Rios, who also is a tenant organizer for the Committee for Boston Public Housing, connected with Harris at a police task force meeting designed to address community tensions. Harris was attending this meeting as part of his "listening tour."

Since then, Harris and Hamilton-Ashé have served as a resource for Rios in her efforts to reorganize Old Colony's Tenant Task Force to include legitimate minority representation.

"We're here to help her gain the confidence and the wherewithal to make a difference, but Lea is

doing it," Harris said. "That's our 'ground-up' approach. We don't come in from the outside to do things for people. We help them make connections for themselves."

"The Fair Housing Center can talk to the BHA and the BHA will listen," said Rios, a Nicaraguan refugee and the mother of a young son. "They have power. So through the Fair Housing Center, I feel like I have power."

Accomplishments of the housing center since the infusion of CommUNITY 2000 funding include:

Enhancing the Work of FANS

Hamilton-Ashé is on the steering committee of Families Advocating Neighborhood Strength (FANS), a South Boston community coalition working to address the needs of low-income families. As with many community groups in greater Boston, affordable housing is one of FANS' greatest concerns. "Ginny brings to us an expertise on housing issues," said Kate Flaherty, FANS chairperson. "She also keeps us focused on race relations. One of our biggest issues is getting minorities to feel that we want them to participate."

Strengthening the Capacity of Regional Civil Rights Efforts

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston is an active member of the Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition, a network of civil rights organizations. David Harris is the Coalition's co-chair. Staff of the Fair Housing Center also participates regularly in the Massachusetts Association of Human Relations Commissions, a network of municipal agencies. The Fair Housing Center has developed close working relationships with the members of these groups, including the Medford Human Rights Commission, staffed by Diane McLeod, who also is chair of the association. "I am one person trying to do so many things at once, and you just can't do it alone," McLeod said. "(The housing center) offers such a complement to what we do. With them involved, it's been like having an extra arm."

By joining forces with civil rights organizations region-wide, the housing center not only is enhancing its own agenda, but is bringing a fair housing focus to the Boston region's civil rights issues.

Advocating for Fair and Affordable Housing Regionally

- On April 24, 2001, the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston released "We Don't Want Your Kind Living Here," a 30-page report on discrimination in the region's rental market. The center conducted extensive in-person and telephone testing over a five-month period in four Boston neighborhoods and 12 communities bordering the city. The results revealed that more than 50 percent of testers experienced some form of discrimination. Release of the report generated wide media coverage.

- The Fair Housing Center negotiated a court settlement in early July 2001, with The Boston Globe, which had been illegally publishing discriminatory rental advertisements. Such ads were overtly or covertly discouraging applicants with children or federal subsidies from renting. The federally-enforceable agreement now requires training, education and policy changes at the Globe.
- The Fair Housing Center is consistently performing testing in the real estate market; has established fee-for-service testing and training for the housing and real estate industry; has trained private attorneys to take pro-bono fair housing cases; and has established an effective system for investigating fair housing complaints.
- In addition, the Fair Housing Center writes and distributes a newsletter, The Bulletin; has created an informative website; and developed multi-lingual brochures.

Those who have witnessed the progress of the fledgling housing center throughout Phase I of CommUNITY 2000 seem most impressed with its sensitivity and its courage. The sensitivity to listen, the courage to act.

"People tend to gloss over issues of race all the time, even in areas of affordable housing," said Aaron Gornstein, executive director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Association, Massachusetts' leading development and housing policy organization. "It's a very delicate issue, one that's often overlooked because bringing it up can make the job of siting affordable housing more difficult. But [the Fair Housing Center] has become a very public voice not only for affordable housing, but for fair housing."

"They're not wimpy," said Mae Bennett Bradley, executive director of the Committee for Boston Public Housing, which represents tenants. "They don't mind confronting issues head-on. Maybe it's because they're new and they don't have any loyalty to anyone. Their only loyalty is to the cause, and the cause is to make sure that all people have equal access to housing."

The Fair Housing Center is continuing as a CommUNITY 2000 partner for Phase II of the project, which will end in 2003, and plans to work with CommUNITY 2000's national partners during Phase II to focus on the following:

- Fostering goodwill among young people, who tend to be most likely to commit hate crimes.
- Expanding awareness of housing rights among disabled persons who live in group homes. The Fair Housing Center also will work with Access Living of Chicago to further this goal.

As they move forward, the staff of the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston will continue to operate by the guiding principles that enabled them to further the CommUNITY 2000 mission of fostering harmony, respect and understanding among neighbors. They will listen, they will learn, they will make a difference.

VIII. LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOR METROPOLITAN OPEN COMMUNITIES

Building Community Region Wide

As the oldest, largest and most comprehensive fair housing organization in the country, the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities was already at the forefront of the fight to end housing discrimination when it began its affiliation with CommUNITY 2000. This Chicago organization brought a wealth of experience and expertise to the project.

The Leadership Council embraced CommUNITY 2000's focus on building coalitions, which both enhanced and was in sync with its own efforts. Providing national support and resources, the project offered the group an opportunity to build or renew associations with religious leaders, law enforcement, politicians and civil rights activists throughout the Chicago region.

"You don't get very far in this sort of work without coalition-building," said Brian White, the group's director of community relations. "From our perspective, CommUNITY 2000 was about building relationships – fighting hate crimes and reducing tensions in housing by getting people together, then encouraging them to focus on these issues and do the work that otherwise would be very difficult for one organization to do alone.

"Relationships were just as important as results. Relationships got results."

The Leadership Council has been a driving force in the fight for fair housing for more than 30 years. It was founded as a result of Dr. Martin Luther King's 1966 campaign for fair, affordable and open housing. Chicago's segregated neighborhoods were the backdrop for Dr. King's campaign.

Since its founding, the organization's mission has been to eliminate discrimination and segregation in the housing markets of Chicago and surrounding suburbs. It is committed to the principle that choosing a home and neighborhood free of racial and ethnic discrimination, and free from the tensions that can result from an oppressive environment, is a fundamental right.

The organization operates a number of programs including legal action, housing counseling, education and advocacy. One of its most renowned and successful efforts was the Gautreaux Assisted Housing Program, which helped more than 7,200 families living in Chicago public housing move to more economically and racially diverse communities. The Gautreaux Program was founded by the Leadership Council in 1976. It took its name from the lead plaintiff in a successful federal lawsuit that claimed the Chicago Housing Authority practiced systemic racial discrimination by segregating low-income black people exclusively in inner city housing projects. The Gautreaux program, which ended in 1998 due to the expiration of its consent decree, established a model for successful relocation programs and spawned more than 60 similar programs around the country.

Despite progress made by the Leadership Council and other Chicago civil rights organizations, Chicago is nearly as segregated today as it was in the 1960s. Though Chicago prides itself on being a "city of neighborhoods," many of these are not welcoming, particularly to African Americans. While there are exceptions, the norm has been for groups to draw color lines around their neighborhoods, and discourage those who are racially different from crossing. The atmosphere in some of Chicago's surrounding communities is friendlier. Nonetheless, as city dwellers have dispersed into the suburbs they often have taken their racial prejudices with them.

The Leadership Council's agenda is more critical than ever. In order to fulfill its central purpose of creating harmonious, diverse neighborhoods throughout the Chicago region, the Council is doing all it can to educate and energize community leadership, and to bring together fair housing groups.

In its affiliation with CommUNITY 2000, the Leadership Council enlisted five area agencies as subcontracting local partners: Access Living, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, HOPE Fair Housing Center, Interfaith Housing Center for the Northern Suburbs and the South Suburban Housing Center. These organizations worked together on many of the Leadership Council's CommUNITY 2000 projects.

Not everyone interested in fostering good will and diversity has the rich history, resources and community connections of the Leadership Council. Nonetheless, the organization's CommUNITY 2000 partnership is a model for establishing productive relationships with a wide range of community leaders and agencies. Most organizations with at least some presence in their communities could successfully replicate this model to suit their own needs.

Of its many efforts to build coalitions region-wide, one of the council's most successful was a carefully orchestrated event, "Congregations Building CommUNITY." Over the course of one weekend, religious denominations throughout Chicago worked to promote the causes of fair housing and racial justice.

"The religious community had a history of involvement with Leadership Council, dating back to 1966, when religious leaders were integral to Dr. King's fair housing campaign," said John Lukehart, vice president of the Leadership Council. "But in the intervening years, as a practical matter, the role of church leaders was much less than it had been. We saw 'Congregations Building CommUNITY' as an opportunity to reconnect with the religious community."

Ever mindful of the strength that comes from collaborations, the Council asked the National Conference for Community and Justice (formerly the National Conference for Christians and Jews) to co-sponsor "Congregations Building CommUNITY." The Council and the NCCJ also formed a planning group of various faiths-based groups and denominational representatives.

The Leadership Council began by setting March 31-April 2, 2000, as its "Congregations Building CommUNITY" weekend. Once the dates were determined, the Council hosted a series of planning

meetings for area religious leaders, discussing ways to best educate congregations. On March 2, the Leadership Council and the NCCJ held a "kick-off" press conference with leaders from 15 denominations. The purpose was to generate media interest in "Congregations Building CommUNITY," as well as encourage congregations to participate.

The kick-off was a success. "Congregations Building CommUNITY" received significant media coverage. Further, more than 200 congregations agreed to participate. The Leadership Council sent the leaders of these congregations resource materials, encouraging them to make the most of the spirit of "Congregations Building CommUNITY" in any or all of the following ways:

- Speak with authority from the pulpit about your congregation's moral obligation to promote and support fair and open communities.
- Ask your congregation's national or regional body for source materials promoting racial and social justice.
- Organize exchanges with people and congregations of different races and ethnic groups.
- Make sure your community has a fair housing ordinance, and an active human relations commission.
- Support government policies that promote development of diverse housing stock, including sin gle-family homes, apartments, and housing options for moderate- and low-income families.
- Establish relationships with several low-income families in your area, including families relocating from public housing, and help them make the transition to self-sufficiency.
- Actively welcome people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds to your community, and speak out against hate crimes.
- Make sure real estate professionals, bankers, and lenders in your community treat all potential buyers or renters equally, regardless of race or ethnicity.

"This event really raised awareness of the fact that race and housing are intertwined," said Bill Purcell, director of the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office for Peace and Justice. Sixty Catholic parishes participated in the weekend. "Where a person lives ties into the whole issue of race. Where does the moral authority come from to address this issue? It comes from the pulpit. That's where the status quo is challenged."

Soon after the weekend took place, organizers began making plans to reconvene "Congregations Building CommUNITY" as a federation to act as a meeting place for faith-based groups involved in housing and racial justice issues. The Leadership Council and others also began organizing a second annual weekend, to be held in May, 2001.

In addition to building on the successes of the first event, the second "Congregations Building CommUNITY" weekend offered participants the opportunity to get involved in a variety of faith-based activities throughout the year, said the Council's Brian White.

The organizers decided to secure a deeper commitment from participating congregations, even if that meant sacrificing the broad outreach that characterized the first year. As a result, about 120 faith organizations joined in the following year's event. While the numbers were down from the first year, the participating congregations' level of involvement was greater, based on a review of follow-up evaluations submitted by those who took part.

Not only was "Congregations Building CommUNITY" a success overall, the relationships that developed among the religious leaders involved contributed to the formation of two separate organizations – Interfaith Open Communities and RELATE (Religious Leaders Acting Together for Equality).

Interfaith Open Communities was created to encourage faith-based groups to continue promoting fair housing and racial justice issues year-round, and to keep them inspired by the "Congregations Building CommUNITY" ideal. It was co-sponsored by Protestants for the Common Good, the Archdiocese, the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, and the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago.

RELATE began as a loose affiliation of religious leaders from Chicago's affluent north suburbs, originally convened by one of the Leadership Council's CommUNITY 2000 subcontracting local partners, Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs. A hate crime brought the leaders together in July 1999. North suburban native Benjamin Smith had gone on a racially-motivated killing spree that made national headlines. Soon after, many of these leaders participated in the "Congregations Building CommUNITY" weekend, and were inspired to create the formal organization that now is known as RELATE. It is dedicated to speaking out in unison to promote social justice and racial harmony. The leaders also decided to work for change on the North Shore in three civil rights arenas: housing, racial profiling and education.

"Our participation in 'Congregations Building CommUNITY' was the reason RELATE could really take off," said Gail Schechter, director of the Interfaith Housing Center and one of the "Congregations Building CommUNITY" organizers. "It helped me, and it's helping the clergy on the North Shore, see that we're not alone up here, that we can and should speak out."

"Affiliation with RELATE reminds us, as clergy, to ask ourselves if we do enough to encourage municipalities to allow for more affordable housing, if we are being courageous in asking tough questions of our relatively well-off congregations," said Rev. Heather VanDeventer, RELATE chairperson and pastor of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in Wilmette.

Additional efforts to foster a harmonious racial and ethnic environment throughout the Chicago region either were launched or enhanced during the CommUNITY 2000/Leadership Council partnership. They were:

The Lake County Anti-Hate Crimes Task Force

The Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, a CommUNITY 2000 subcontracting local partner, asked the U.S. Attorney's Office to convene a meeting for public officials and law enforcement in the Chicago area on the subject of hate crimes. At the meeting, which was held in September 1999, Lake County State's Attorney Michael Waller expressed an interest in developing ways to prevent and/or respond to such crimes. Lake County's population is economically and racially diverse, but poorly integrated. While the number of reported hate crimes is not a significant percentage of overall crime statistics, some of the county's semi-rural, economically depressed towns long have been breeding grounds for white supremacists groups, according to the County Sheriff's Department.

With help from the Lawyers' Committee, the Interfaith Housing Center and local Lake County organizations, the Leadership Council developed a plan to accomplish the following: research hate crimes and hate group activity; educate youth, community members, police officers and prosecutors; and encourage hate crime reporting and recording.

Their experience over the two-year span of CommUNITY 2000 was both exhilarating and frustrating, according to Brian White of the Leadership Council. "Our Lake County effort continues to suffer from insufficient community-based energy and infrastructure, though progress is being made," he said. "A significant amount of time and energy was spent simply building the capacity of the task force to do this kind of work." Among the successes were bringing the hate crimes issue to the attention of community leaders, and organizing seminars on hate group activity in Lake County and the metropolitan region.

"This project has been a real challenge," said Betsy Shuman-Moore, of the Lawyers' Committee, who, as of this writing, is continuing her work to keep the task force going. "One of our frustrations has been the difficulty in getting local leaders to take over."

Despite the lack of strong Lake County leadership or sufficient funding for programs, those who attended the task force's planning sessions wholeheartedly endorsed the concept. They also expressed the hope that the task force would ultimately broaden its base of support, and continue as a force for change in Lake County.

"I've been doing this work for 15 years, and I know hate crimes just don't get reported," said David Godlewski of the Lake County Sheriff's Criminal Investigation Division, who attended some of the planning sessions. "Either people are intimidated, or they don't understand their rights, or they don't trust the police, or they're just used to being treated poorly.

"But these groups are in Lake County, and they're not just rag tag bunches of kids. The National Alliance [a white supremacist group], for example, is very well organized, with a hierarchy. We've got to be organized to combat them. A group like the Task Force that can be a bridge between citizens and law enforcement is a good idea."

"I think [the task force] is worthwhile, but we're not there yet," said Pat Konicki, executive director of the Fair Housing Center of Lake County. "We need [to hire] staff to go out to groups and tell them what their rights are. Until people know what a hate crime is and recognize when they are being victimized, they aren't going to report these incidents.

"But people didn't see fair housing or domestic violence as issues [in Lake County] a decade ago, and now they do."

The Leadership Council, Lawyers' Committee, and Interfaith remain committed to the Lake County Anti-Hate Crimes Task Force beyond the parameters of CommUNITY 2000. Toward this end, the task force is planning for a year-long education and organizing effort in conjunction with Partners Against Hate, a joint initiative of LCCREF, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence.

Immigrant Fair Housing Roundtable

Aware that immigrant groups in the Chicago area experience many tensions around housing issues, the Leadership Council convened the Immigrant Fair Housing Roundtable in the fall of 1999.

The Immigrant Roundtable, which brought together advocates for immigrant populations, met quarterly throughout the CommUNITY 2000 project, and accomplished two primary objectives:

- Produced a fair housing resource guide for organizations working with immigrants.
- Identified municipal practices that contribute to community tensions involving immigrants, including discriminatory enforcement of municipal property maintenance codes.

Regional Exchange Congress in Oak Park

The Leadership Council co-convened the Regional Exchange Congress in Oak Park the weekend of September 20-21, 2000. Their purpose was to bring the leaders of diverse communities together with community leaders struggling to successfully integrate. Organized around a series of panel discussions, more than 300 participants from 33 communities shared information on ways to promote and sustain true racial and ethnic diversity.

Meeting the Challenges of Diversity Conference

The Leadership Council and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission co-sponsored the "Meeting the Challenges of Diversity" Conference to explore ways for public officials to balance the economic and development interests of municipalities with the fair housing rights of an increasingly diverse metropolitan population. Held on April 7, 2000, the conference brought together more than 125 municipal, county, and state government officials; real estate professionals; and representatives from

non-profit agencies to discuss the social and economic implications of the Chicago area's changing demographics. Participants also studied code enforcement and housing occupancy standards, and human relations programs that work.

Education Outreach

The Leadership Council helped sponsor events for high school administrators in Chicago's south and west suburbs of Chicago to learn about anti-bias programs. The two events attracted several dozen administrators; a handful of these went back to their districts, and put into place anti-discrimination training programs for their students and/or staffs.

Throughout the course of the CommUNITY 2000 project, the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities and its CommUNITY 2000 subcontracting local partners reached out to all manner of community leaders in the Chicago area. In advancing the project's ideal of creating diverse, harmonious neighborhoods, these partners were determined to move the region's leadership beyond the notion that enforcing fair housing laws is a form of obligation. The Leadership Council's mission was to inspire and encourage those in positions of power to take a positive, welcoming approach toward all that seek to live and work in their communities.

"Fair housing is not just about enforcing laws," said Gail Schechter of Interfaith, a subcontracting local partner. "What's the use of enforcement when a lot of people won't even consider moving into certain areas because they are so inhospitable?"

In the "Congregations Building CommUNITY" brochure distributed to religious leaders, the Leadership Council stated:

"While segregation has deep economic and political consequences that impact everyone's self-interest, overcoming segregation is, in the final analysis, a matter of the heart."

In essence, this was the Leadership Council's consistent message to all of the Chicago area's leaders.

IX. ACCESS LIVING

Building Community Through Innovation

CommUNITY 2000's national partners knew that Access Living, one of the oldest and largest advocates for independent living in the country, was equipped to address tensions that arise when group homes for disabled persons move into neighborhoods.

They did not know that Access Living would redefine what it means to address tensions in the communities that define the lives of a portion of the disabled population – the group homes themselves.

Access Living, founded in Chicago in 1980 and staffed with a majority of disabled persons, seeks housing alternatives that enable the disabled to live independently while maintaining access to critical services. It also emphasizes community outreach and education, advocacy, community organizing, and civil rights.

In its affiliation with Phase I of CommUNITY 2000, Access Living took the innovative position that the civil rights of the disabled were just as likely to be violated in the group homes where many of them lived as in their surrounding neighborhoods. Access Living broadened CommUNITY 2000's definition of "community." For disabled persons, a respectful, harmonious living environment is one that allows them the choice to live in the most unrestricted, integrated environment possible, said Daisy Feidt, Access Living's CommUNITY 2000 project director.

In general, the United States has been slow to protect the rights of the disabled on all fronts, including access to housing. People with disabilities were excluded from the Fair Housing Act of 1968, an oversight not corrected until an amendment to the act was passed 20 years later.

National statistics on hate crimes indicate that bias-motivated crimes against the disabled are not on par with crimes against other minority groups. (FBI statistics reveal that of the 8,063 hate crime incidents reported in the year 2000, 36 were against the disabled). But Feidt and others who work with the disabled believe the numbers are so low because the disabled community as a whole remains unaware of what constitutes a hate crime and how to report one.

Similarly, while the 1988 amendments to the Fair Housing Act guaranteed access to housing, it did not ensure fair treatment. Often when group homes move into communities, neighbors resist, assuming that their property values will fall or that the home's residents pose a threat. Further, Feidt said, residents of group homes frequently face internal oppression; the providers who are paid to meet their needs place unwarranted restrictions on them.

Access Living maintains that the solution is to move people with disabilities out of group homes and into more independent living situations, while still providing them the services they need. This eliminates the tensions that develop when neighbors feel threatened by group homes, Feidt said. It also eliminates the restrictive environments of the group homes themselves, she added.

However, it is difficult to change the entrenched belief among many in the political and civil rights arenas that group homes are an ideal living situation for the disabled, Feidt acknowledged.

Fortunately advocates for the disabled, such as Access Living, were given a weapon to fight the status quo in 1999 with passage of the Olmstead decision. A 1999 Supreme Court ruling, it

challenges Federal, state and local governments to develop more opportunities for persons with disabilities. The decision interprets the Americans with Disabilities Act to require states to administer their services, programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Olmstead decision's issuance and the partnership with CommUNITY 2000 were a happy coincidence for Access Living, Feidt said. Eager to force government bodies and group home providers into compliance with Olmstead, Access Living proposed using CommUNITY 2000 resources to develop a broad-based plan to help the disabled better understand their housing rights, and encourage them to make their own decisions about acceptable living situations.

After carefully considering Access Living's unorthodox proposal, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund embraced Access Living's approach, and lent national support and resources to the organization's efforts.

"Access Living's ideas were innovative and compelling," said Corrine Yu of LCCREF, who was national program director for CommUNITY 2000. "We all learned a great deal from this particular partnership."

Access Living's efforts focused on two goals:

1. Ending the practice of requiring disabled persons to accept predetermined services (which often don't suit their individual needs) in exchange for housing.
2. Creating as many choices as possible for the disabled population.

Ideally, Feidt said, the disabled should be able to live in the least restrictive environment that suits their needs, and live with whom they choose. "If a disabled person chooses to live in his or her own apartment," she said, "then whatever support services are necessary should come to that apartment."

If a disabled person chooses a group home setting, Feidt said, the services provided within the group home should be tailored to fit the needs of the individual resident. Too often, she said, residents of group homes—otherwise known as Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA) in the state of Illinois—are forced to agree to restrictive conditions in exchange for housing. These conditions are solely for the benefit of the group home provider, she said, not the individual.

Such conditions include requiring group home residents to spend the bulk of their waking hours in day treatment facilities in exchange for housing. This, according to group home providers, is a more efficient way for them to run a congregate living facility. However, day treatment does not always meet the needs of the individual client, Feidt said, and can even be counterproductive.

As a CommUNITY 2000 partner, Access Living advanced the cause of housing self-determination for the disabled on a number of fronts. Its most successful and far-reaching effort, according to Feidt, was to

develop and implement a self-advocacy curriculum that trained disabled persons to teach the classes to their peers.

Access Living held more than a dozen peer-to-peer trainings for disabled persons that taught:

- The definition of advocacy/self-advocacy
- Laws that protect CILA clients
- How CILA clients can stand up for their rights
- Housing choices for CILA clients
- Techniques to make self-advocacy more effective
- Practicing self-advocacy skills
- Ways to get involved in the disability movement
- Peer support groups available for people with disabilities

Because group home providers are required to schedule educational programs for their residents, most did not balk at allowing the peer-to-peer trainers into the homes, Feidt said.

Leodies Jefferson was one of Access Living's peer-to-peer instructors. A 49-year-old mentally ill man, Jefferson has lived in group homes since 1991. According to Feidt, his story is typical of those whom Access Living successfully trained to help their fellow group home residents:

"It was a beautiful experience. I was talking to people, telling them that I was able to improve my situation and they could too. I told them they didn't need to feel like prisoners – either in housing or the whole mental health system," Jefferson said.

"I enjoyed giving them names of people who could help them with any problems they were having. I said that these people helped me a great deal, that I moved from a highly supervised situation living with eight people to a less supervised situation with three people.

"I hope I was able to help the people I talked to. By me having mental illness, I know it's very hard to make changes. You feel threatened. You think you're going to mess up, go down instead of up. I hope I was able to get across that they can always improve themselves."

Access Living further advanced the cause of self-determination in housing by:

- Hosting a series of community forums to educate fair housing advocates about the housing needs and rights of people with disabilities. Many of these advocates automatically assume

that group home providers speak on behalf of group home residents. Housing advocates also assume that group home situations are beneficial, and do not know about alternatives, Feidt said.

- Conducting housing workshops in those university and college classes that teach disability-related curricula on why current living situations for the disabled often are oppressive. "Access Living helped my class understand the range of housing options that should be available to the disabled," said Paula Davis, who teaches a course entitled "Disability, Diversity and Society" at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

- Initiating a grassroots campaign to push lawmakers to revamp the housing system so that disabled individuals are:
    1. in control of their living choices
    2. not forced to accept certain services in exchange for a place to live, as is typical in many group homes.

- Developing a rapid response system – a plan for reacting quickly when community tensions arise – that aids disabled persons who feel threatened, no matter their living situation. Access Living's rapid response system mobilizes when community tensions arise because a person with disabilities moves into a neighborhood. (If neighborhood tensions involve a group home, Access Living stipulates that it will use the rapid response system only if a resident of a group home feels threatened, not a group home provider). Regarding group homes, Access Living also executes its rapid response system when a group home resident experiences tension within the home itself. "We are well-prepared to respond to neighborhood tensions," said Feidt, "but only if an individual feels threatened, not a group home provider."

Access Living is continuing its campaign to ensure housing rights for the disabled beyond Phase I of CommUNITY 2000, and is optimistic that its perspective is replacing widely accepted notions about group homes.

"One of our goals was to get civil rights advocates and politicians to ask themselves whether their actions were really helping the person with disabilities or the provider," Feidt said. "We can tell from the responses we're getting that now they are asking themselves that question."

Further, LCCREF has enlisted Access Living to teach its self-advocacy curriculum to CommUNITY 2000's Phase II local partners in Boston and North Carolina.

"We know that this is not a point of view that many in the civil rights and fair housing communities are aware of," said Corrine Yu, "and we want to spread the word about self-advocacy for people with disabilities."

X. THE FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF SAN DIEGO

Building Community with a Rapid Response System

That the Fair Housing Council of San Diego (FHCSD) accomplished much during the two years of CommUNITY 2000 Phase I – including the formation of a Rapid Response Team to address housing related hate crimes – is commendable.

That the FHCSD did so with a paucity of grant funding is remarkable.

The successes of the FHCSD are particularly instructive for any group or individual looking for ways to reduce community tensions on a tight budget.

The San Diego Council received the smallest portion by far of the $1.5 million that was dispersed among two national and four local partners involved in Phase I of CommUNITY 2000 project. The organization was allocated approximately $20,000 over the course of Phase I.

Nevertheless, this local partner was able to achieve many of the goals that the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund initially envisioned for it, before LCCREF made the difficult decision to reduce the housing council's funding.

The housing council's role in CommUNITY 2000 is an excellent illustration of how much can be accomplished to reduce, respond to and reconcile community tensions regardless of funding availability. The key to the organization's success under these circumstances was the potent combination of a well-established infrastructure, strong local leadership, and clear directives at the national level.

Mary Scott Knoll, executive director of the FHCSD, believed wholeheartedly in CommUNITY 2000's objectives and clearly understood what LCCREF hoped she could achieve. She brought to bear her considerable skills as a long-time grassroots organizer and fair housing advocate to ensure that the housing council accomplished as many of the project's goals as possible. She succeeded.

"It is difficult to imagine what more this local project director could have done in these two years, even WITH adequate funding," wrote Juliet Saltman, a CommUNITY 2000 Advisory Board member, in her assessment of the San Diego portion of the project. "That she did it with virtually no funding is truly remarkable and a tribute to her considerable skills in networking and organization, and her personal traits of perseverance and diligence."

The Fair Housing Council of San Diego opened its doors in 1989. As with fair housing centers across the nation, its mission is to eliminate unlawful housing discrimination in the rental, sales, lending and property insurance markets of San Diego. Knoll was the FHCSD's first executive director.

"San Diego historically was a small military town that didn't have the diverse population of Los Angeles," Knoll said. "But over time, that has changed. Our Latino and Asian populations continue to grow rapidly, with the African American population not far behind.

"There are natural tensions that come with changing populations in communities. We were very interested in the CommUNITY 2000 premise that specific strategies can be put in place to reduce those tensions."

When the CommUNITY 2000 project initially was conceived, Baltimore, Chicago and San Diego were slated to be the local partner cities. These cities represented different geographic regions of the country, had well-established fair housing centers, and had diverse populations susceptible to housing-related conflicts. Each of the four partners (two were based in Chicago) was to receive approximately the same amount of grant monies.

However, officials at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), troubled by the inability of the Boston Housing Authority to successfully integrate its public housing developments, decided to substitute Boston for Baltimore as the CommUNITY 2000 local partner on the East Coast. Boston lacked an entrenched fair housing center. Therefore, HUD and LCCREF shifted funds from San Diego to the fledgling Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston (in addition to the funding originally earmarked for Baltimore) in order to help Boston establish the necessary infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the specific objectives of the San Diego local project remained basically the same, and clearly spelled out. They were as follows:

- To help the general public better understand fair housing laws, and be able to identify housing related hate crimes
- To create a system for receiving, processing, resolving, recording and tracking fair housing complaints that derive from acts of intimidation or coercion
- To celebrate diversity as a way to combat negative racial impressions
- To create a formal rapid response system so that when housing related hate crimes occurred, the system could:
    - Address the needs of victims, using the protections and redress provided under federal and state fair housing laws
    - Intervene with the perpetrators
    - Educate the community about programs and strategies that help create a more open and welcoming environment

Creation of a rapid response team was both the major goal and the major achievement of the San Diego portion of the CommUNITY 2000 project, according to sources at the national and local levels. However, formal implementation of the rapid response team did not happen until the end of the project.

Knoll took the approach that a rapid response system would be useless if people did not realize they were being victimized. The FHCSD would be creating a response team with nothing to respond to. Instead of throwing too many balls into the air at once, she decided to begin by focusing primarily on education. First, she made sure that she and her staff were well versed in federal and state laws that applied both to fair housing and hate crime issues. Second, she began the process of informing the public at large.

"People don't understand their rights here," Knoll said. "There has been a startling increase in the number of hate crimes reported in and around San Diego. This increase corresponds to the influx of minorities moving into neighborhoods. But no one had ever filed a claim that they were a victim of a hate crime that was housing related."

In the first year of the CommUNITY 2000 project, Knoll and her staff moved to offset the education and information void by:

- Producing English and Spanish informational flyers titled "Hate Crimes in Housing Are Unlawful," which were targeted to buyers, renters, real estate professionals and community organizations
- Hosting symposiums on housing related hate crimes for property owners and managers, and law enforcement
- Beginning the planning process for a two-day cultural diversity festival, held in Spring 2001
- Incorporating a segment on hate crimes in housing for its already established consumer outreach and education programs

The FHCSD also began to set the stage for creation of a rapid response team by becoming a member of the San Diego Regional Hate Crimes Coalition. Once again, creativity and resourcefulness were more instrumental in getting the job done than money.

"As a way of approaching the need for a rapid response system, we came through the back door, so to speak, and aligned ourselves with the coalition," Knoll said. "Eventually, we were able to transform a subcommittee of this group into our rapid response team."

Hector Jiminez, the Deputy District Attorney in charge of prosecuting hate crimes for the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, credits Knoll with making the coalition aware of the relationship between housing and the kinds of tensions that can lead to hate crimes.

"Because we were looking at other aspects of the hate crimes picture, we never considered housing," said Jiminez. "It wasn't even on our radar. That's where Mary came in and opened a whole new door for us."

Through the coalition, the Fair Housing Council began building critical relationships. This has been a hallmark of the CommUNITY 2000 project across the board. The Council became part of a network that included the District Attorney's Hate Crimes Unit, the San Diego Police Department Crisis Intervention Program, the Anti-Defamation League's Hate Crimes Victims Assistance Program, and the California Human Rights Commission.

By the end of the second year of CommUNITY 2000, these groups, working together as the Hate Crimes in Housing Subcommittee, were a bona fide rapid response team. They established an email network that serves as an effective rapid response tool. As an example, the network was able to act swiftly and decisively when presented with the case of a Chinese family being harassed by its next door neighbor.

Hui Cai, her husband Yi Hu, and their two young children moved into a neighborhood in Del Mar in December 2000. Almost immediately, their neighbor began harassing them. He placed a "Boycott China" sign on his property in view of their home; filed unsubstantiated charges with authorities claiming they abused their children; videotaped their comings and goings; and in August 2001, filed suit against them claiming he couldn't stand the smell of Chinese cooking.

Initially, Cai was too fearful of her neighbor to fight back. But a human resources counselor where she worked convinced her to contact the State's Attorney's Office, and officials there put her in touch with the housing council. Using its email strategy, the council immediately alerted the Housing Subcommittee/Rapid Response Team. And the team marshaled its forces to get the family the legal help and victim support services it needed. Backed by the Rapid Response coalition, the family is now fully aware of its rights and resources, and is considering a countersuit.

"If this family had contacted us, and there had been no rapid response team, I doubt we would have been able to give them the help they needed," Jiminez said. "These people were definitely being harassed, but I have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a crime has been committed. This guy never stepped on their property or physically threatened them. That's why having the sorts of non-criminal remedies that the rest of the response team provides is critical."

The Fair Housing Council accomplished additional goals in the second year of the CommUNITY 2000 project, most notably:

- Hosting the two-day Unity Fest 2001, on March 27 and 28. The event featured dance, musical and theatrical performances by numerous groups that represented the ethnic diversity of the San Diego area. Festival attendance was modest, but those who came were quite taken with

the quality of the performances and the optimistic message of the overall event. In fact, Connie Johnson of Partners for Healthy Neighborhoods, based in north San Diego County, was so impressed with the idea that she currently is working with Mary Knoll and the housing council staff to host the 2nd Annual Unity Fest in 2002. Knoll's feeling is that Unity Fest is a concept that will continue to grow bigger and more influential as the years go on.

- Producing additional "Hate Crimes in Housing Are Unlawful" flyers in Asian and African Languages.
- Collaborating with the California Department of Justice to develop a statewide hate crimes flowchart that links all California fair housing centers to state resources.

The CommUNITY 2000 project succeeded in broadening the focus of the Fair Housing Council of San Diego. As a result of national objectives, the San Diego council has built several invaluable coalitions that it will sustain far beyond the life of the project itself. These coalitions – the rapid response team, the Unity Fest partnership, statewide contacts – were cultivated carefully by a committed local partner.

"We made CommUNITY 2000 happen in San Diego by incorporating the objectives into our everyday work," Knoll said.

It is a strategy well worth considering for those interested in fostering good will in their communities without access to significant financial resources.

XI. BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR THE FUTURE

In the health care professions these days, the focus has shifted from exclusively caring for the sick to keeping patients well. Doctors practice preventative medicine. Children go for "wellness" visits. In much the same way, Phase I of CommUNITY 2000 established a precedent in the fair housing arena for nurturing a culture of wellness in our nation's communities.

By recognizing that enforcing fair housing laws and fostering community goodwill should go hand-in-hand; by developing strategies to reduce, respond to and reconcile community tensions, both nationally and locally; and by detailing successful strategies in a user-friendly "Menu of Strategies" that encourages replication, CommUNITY 2000:

- Laid the groundwork for continued successes in Phase II of the project, a coalition of the original national partners and local partners in Boston and the North Carolina research triangle region.
- Created a community tension reduction prototype useful for any organization or individual seeking to build more harmonious communities in the future.

CommUNITY 2000's successes were rooted in a strategy to build coalitions, exchange information and maintain flexibility. The project's emphasis on constant interplay between the national and local partners led to the following positive outcomes:

- CommUNITY 2000 local partners fulfilled the national partners' oversight and monitoring requirements, yet retained autonomy and discretion when executing their local objectives. This ensured that each project reflected a combination of local experience and national perspective.
- CommUNITY 2000 balanced local control of programs with national coordination of the overall project. This created a structure that offered the best chance for local and national efforts to continue beyond the term of the grant.
- CommUNITY 2000 called for programs that shared common elements, yet fit particular circumstances. This addressed the need to respond to local conditions while developing national approaches that could be replicated by other communities.
- CommUNITY 2000 generated a wide range of activities. The variety and scope of projects allowed for some concrete outcomes in the short run, and laid the groundwork for some broad-based change in the long run.
- CommUNITY 2000 worked to prevent and respond to community tensions with an innovative, two-pronged approach that was adopted by each national and local partner: Combat hate with a rapid response system; Combat apathy and ignorance with education and public outreach.
- CommUNITY 2000 streamlined communication between the national and local partners. It created an internal, secure "Intranet" website, and matched local and national staff members to work together.
- CommUNITY 2000 capitalized on the extensive contacts of the national staff, Advisory Board and local partners to bring together groups from the fair housing and hate crimes prevention camps that had not been not familiar with one another.
- CommUNITY 2000 expanded and enhanced fair housing organizations' scope and effectiveness by providing training and technical assistance from leading hate crimes experts.

In the short term, CommUNITY 2000 is advancing Phase II, which began in December 2000, and will end in 2003. The Phase II partners expect to accomplish the following:

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund and the National Fair Housing Alliance will:

- Continue to bring together coalitions of national and local organizations with expertise in civil rights, fair housing and hate crimes to advance a national tension prevention agenda
- Pay particular attention to specific tensions surrounding the growth of non-English speaking communities in previously homogenous areas
- Develop and implement an evaluation component

The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston will:

- Foster goodwill among young people, who tend to be the most likely to commit hate crimes
- Expand awareness of housing rights among disabled persons who live in group homes. The housing center also will work with Access Living of Chicago to further this goal
- Reach out to the region's non-English speaking populations and make them aware of their rights.

North Carolina will:

- Operate within the framework of a "Regional Working Group" composed of community groups throughout the region. The working group will focus particularly on the area's growing Latino and Asian Pacific American communities.
- Hold a regional CommUNITY 2000 Summit to build coalitions and prevent duplication of resources and efforts among civil rights groups
- Capitalize on the strengths of those coalitions to reach out to the wider community, including business leaders, civic and political leaders

In the long run, all of CommUNITY 2000's participants – from the local partners in both Phases, to the national partners, to the Advisory Board members – will continue to promote harmonious communities across the nation for years to come.

"We're a diverse country and we're becoming more so," said Karen McGill Lawson, Executive Director of LCCREF. "Even if people want to wall themselves away, surrounded only by their own little group, that's not very practical or realistic. We have no choice except to learn to live together, and so we may as well do it right. This is the great promise of America."

Appendix A: Case Studies on Coalition Building Activities

Chapter I. Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century, the dominant social justice issue in the nation continues to be the persistence of racial isolation. According to research compiled by Professor John Logan of the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research, "the 2000 Census shows little change in community integration despite growing ethnic diversity in the nation."[1] This analysis of residential patterns finds that with few exceptions, white, black, and Hispanic people continue to live in neighborhoods that are not significantly integrated. Since 1990, this continuing pattern of segregation has persisted, even in the wake of great population shifts of minorities from cities to suburbs.

Successful neighborhood integration is central to the American ideal of equal opportunity. Among the questions raised by data suggesting the United States' failure to achieve higher levels of integration are the following:

- How do neighborhoods create inclusive communities that welcome every resident?
- How can local governments, advocates and other sectors of the community come together to respond to or reduce tensions that may occur as residents begin to live in integrated communities?
- What are communities doing now to alleviate the problems that arise when people choose to live in more integrated communities?

All Americans have a stake in resolving these important questions, for the consequences of failing to do so are severe. Recent years have witnessed too many painful reminders of how attacks against innocent people driven by irrational hatred threaten the very body and soul of America. Not only do these crimes have devastating effects on the victims, their families and friends, but hate crimes are acts of violence against the American ideal: that we can make one nation out of many different people.

Yet while victims of bias-motivated crimes such as James Byrd and Matthew Shepard have garnered national attention, many incidents of non-criminal or non-violent bias-motivated behavior do not make the headlines; nor do the misperceptions and negative stereotypes that can make members of communities fearful of groups viewed as posing as a threat. From killings and beatings to acts of arson and vandalism to physical and verbal assaults, these bias-motivated behaviors injure or even kill thousands of people, terrify countless others, divide Americans against each other, and distort our entire society.

[1] John R. Logan, Segregation in America: Findings from Census 2000. Albany: Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research, 2001.

Unfortunately, hate violence is a more serious problem than is generally recognized. A 1997 report published by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) and the Leadership Conference Education Fund (LCEF) entitled, "Cause for Concern: Hate Crimes in America," confirms the breadth and growth of the hate crime problem in the United States, documenting with statistics and case studies the extent of hate crimes in the country, and includes examples of hate crimes that have occurred when racial minorities move into predominantly white neighborhoods.

No national statistics are currently kept on the number of housing-related hate crime incidents. However, hate crime experts agree that a large percentage of hate crimes are committed against victims within the neighborhoods in which they live. FBI data collected under the Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1990 now provide the best—although incomplete—national picture of the magnitude of the hate violence problem in America. The FBI Uniform Crime Report defines a hate crime or bias crime as a criminal offense committed against a person, property, or society which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity/national origin. According to the 2000 FBI Hate Crime Statistics Report, there were a total of 8152 bias-motivated criminal incidents reported across the country for 2000. Of the incidents, 4368 (53.6%) were racial bias motivated; 1483 (18.2%) were religious bias motivated; sexual orientation bias accounted for 1330 (16.3%); ethnicity/national origin bias was the cause of 927 (11.4%); disability bias was connected with 36 (0.4%); and the remaining 8 incidents (0.1%) were the result of multiple biases.

Beyond the sheer numbers, hate crimes and other bias-motivated types of behavior are pernicious because they polarize citizens and exacerbate tensions throughout a community. Hate violence is not only a crime against an individual, but an assault against an entire group of people. The consequences of bias crimes reach beyond the harm inflicted on an individual victim; one sector of the community may feel that it has been targeted for violence, which may confirm that sector's worst fears that others in the community harbor a deep-seated animus. Stated another way, hate violence not only has an impact on the perpetrator and victim, it also undermines the sense of community among those not directly involved in a particular incident.

A similar dynamic can emerge from non-criminal incidents that are motivated by hate. Threats and intimidation where people live communicate a clear message: "You are not welcome here." Housing-related tensions such as outbursts of protest and NIMBYism (Not in My Backyard), which can occur long before a housing-related hate crime is committed, can very effectively communicate the same message, causing people in targeted groups to feel despised and unwelcome and those in non-targeted groups to be considered as silent conspirators.

While housing-related hate incidents are the exception rather than the rule, to catalyze community response to housing-related tensions when they do occur, LCCREF, in conjunction with the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), a prominent national advisory board with relevant expertise, and local partners in Boston, Chicago, San Diego, and the Triangle Region of North Carolina launched CommUNITY 2000, the nation's first housing-related community tensions program. CommUNITY 2000 has been conceived in response to the need to address a complex problem in a strategic and coordinated manner, both on a

national scale and in the local sites. Recognizing that dealing with existing community tensions, as well as working to prevent their development, is an important element of ensuring equal housing opportunity, CommUNITY 2000 brings together a national and local coalition of organizations with extensive experience and expertise in intergroup relations, hate crimes, fair housing, and related civil rights issues. This coalition core structure provides extensive national coverage and facilitates involvement at the local level where tensions occur, as well as coordinates resources in a cost-effective manner and avoids duplication in addressing a multifaceted problem.

To ensure the fullest range of input, participation, coordination, and buy-in, CommUNITY 2000 also leverages several other critical coalitions, including:

- the civil rights coalition within which LCCREF occupies a central position;
- the National Advisory Board guiding the CommUNITY 2000 project, which includes prominent experts in intergroup relations, hate crimes prevention, law enforcement, civil rights, academia, communications, and the media; and
- the local coalitions that are being created in each local site through the project.

If successful, CommUNITY 2000 will not only provide, through a core coalition structure, community-based responses to the particular circumstances faced by communities in Boston, Chicago, San Diego, and the North Carolina Triangle Region, but also set the stage, as we share our learning, for future and ongoing collaborations toward the alleviation of fair housing-related tensions in communities throughout the nation.

Toward this end, LCCREF has undertaken this study, part of a larger environmental scan designed to assess the extent of work and expertise in this field. In this report, we focus on the extent to which other groups around the country are forming or have already formed coalitions to address the issue of community tensions. Given the complex and multi-faceted nature of the issue, a coalition-based approach would seem to have the greatest likelihood of success.

Thus, we engaged in the case studies that follow in order to:

- examine the potential for the formation of coalitions among fair housing groups, intergroup relations advocates, civil rights organizations and other institutions concerned with community harmony;
- analyze the effectiveness of these coalitions in instances in which they do exist and the barriers to their existence in instances in which they do not; and
- draw conclusions regarding the challenges to forming coalitions, thereby setting a context for the work of CommUNITY 2000.

Our study focuses on ten cities: Atlanta, GA; Cincinnati, OH; Durham, NC; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; New Orleans, LA; Omaha, NE; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; and Richmond, VA. We have taken care throughout to provide illustrative examples gleaned from interviews with fair housing advocates, intergroup relations activists, civil rights and religious leaders. In addition to housing-related activity, we have included examples of hate crimes that may have a community connection , as well as incidents of police brutality, intimidation, or discrimination that may catalyze the creation of progressive coalitions. During the course of our field research, we looked for patterns in the types of coalitions formed, any specific reasons or catalysts for the formation of a coalition, as well as any similarities (and unique circumstances) that have prevented coalitions from forming in areas which otherwise appeared ripe for a coalition to exist.

While CommUNITY 2000 is by nature and design an inter-organizational collaboration, we nonetheless acknowledge that engaging the activities that foster and nurture coalitions and collaborative endeavors can sometimes involve trade-offs. Stated another way, as was pointed out by nearly all the organizations we interviewed, the energy and resources that an organization invests in fostering coalitions can also be spent pursuing other important goals that it may be able to accomplish on its own, or within the already existing level of collaborative activity. Consequently, we found that the organizations we researched consciously strove to determine the desirable balance between achieving optimum effectiveness within their current arrangements (often as solitary actors) and investing in actions designed to foster a higher level of collaborative action.

As the reader will see, while many of the organizations we contacted conceded that they could spend more time and energy on fostering coalitions, few defined the current level of collaboration in their city as lacking or otherwise problematic. Given the nature of this study, it is impossible to determine with substantial certainty whether a particular organization is making a mistake by not investing more in collaborative activity.

Nevertheless, in the sections that follow, we do frame the untapped potential for coalition formation in the cities we studied in a light of significant regret. Central to the success of the American civil rights movement has been the ability of organizations representing diverse constituencies and interests to set aside their individual differences and collaborate to pursue common goals. In situations affected by community tensions, this conclusion is no less true, where the multi-faceted nature of the issue suggests to us that a coalition-based approach is likely to have significant benefits for local communities. Accordingly, we offer this report in the hope it provides a useful tool that will meet the challenges faced by a broad spectrum of communities across the country.

Chapter II. Case Study Methodology

Our study is organized around the following broad sets of questions germane to whether other groups around the country are forming or have formed coalitions or networks to address the issue of community tensions:

- What was the potential for the formation of coalitions among fair housing groups, intergroup relations advocates, civil rights organizations and "mainstream" organizations in communities other than the CommUNITY 2000 pilot sites?
- What was the effectiveness of coalitions in instances where they do exist and the barriers to their formation in instances where they do not?
- Where collaborations do exist, what are the factors that are most relevant to the creation, as well as the depth and breadth, of such collaboration?

To address these questions, the following framework was designed. We sought first to identify the geographic focus of our research, based on our assessment of locales that might be fertile ground for inter-organizational collaboration. Beginning with the basic assumption that an important indicator of the likelihood of collaboration would be the presence of multiple organizations in a city with missions related to community tensions prevention and reduction, we focused on cities that met the following criteria:

- Cities that had affiliate chapters of both the National Conference of Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA). Both of these organizations were deemed to be important participants in any coalition aiming to address housing-related community tensions.
- Of these, cities that had experienced relatively recent high profile incidents which raised awareness around community tensions issues. For this purpose, we did not attempt to limit the definition of "incident." Thus, we considered incidents as varied as the publication of a fair housing Analysis of Impediments report to a widely publicized hate crime.

We expected that any city that met both of these criteria would hold great potential for inter-organizational collaboration, whether this collaboration actually occurred or not. Using this criteria, we focused on the following sites: Atlanta, GA; Cincinnati, OH; Durham, NC; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; New Orleans, LA; Omaha, NE; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; and Richmond, VA.

Once these cities were determined, we then identified the people in each city with whom we would conduct interviews to explore the factors that we had determined were most likely to promote a coalition-based approach. We developed an initial list of contacts based on recommendations from national staff at NCCJ and NFHA. In the course of these interviews, additional contacts were generated, which we also pursued.

Through these interviews, we collected data that formed the basis of the following profiles of the collaboration occurring in individual cities. This data also helped us identify cross-cutting themes reflecting the factors that, in general, appeared to influence collaboration and coalition building between different groups likely to be concerned with tensions in their communities. Finally, our field research in the ten cities we studied formed the basis of the recommendations that appear at the conclusion of this report.

Chapter III. City Approaches to Community Tensions

This section examines the following ten cities in the United States: Atlanta, GA; Cincinnati, OH; Durham, NC; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; New Orleans, LA; Omaha, NE; Phoenix, AZ; Pittsburgh, PA; and Richmond, VA. It is noteworthy that according to a recent study of Census 2000 data, each of these cities fall within the top 50 segregated metro areas in the country, for either black-white or Hispanic-white segregation, underscoring the increasing importance for local groups in each of the cities to work together to resolve the tensions that occur under these conditions. Our research in each of these cities focused on eliciting perspectives about the factors that would likely influence the level of local collaboration on community tensions prevention and response.

1. A Snapshot of Tensions in Ten Cities

For each city, we first sought to determine whether any incidents had occurred in the past few years that might have raised local awareness about community tensions. In the Pittsburgh area, for example, two hate-motivated murders generated extensive national and media attention. In one incident, Ronald Taylor, a black man, was charged with murder and ethnic intimidation for killing three white men in Wilkinsburg, an area outside of Pittsburgh. Mr. Taylor was said to be mentally ill and to have chosen his victims purposely because they were white. Seven days later, Richard Baumhammers, a white male, was charged with both murder and ethnic intimidation in the killings of two Asian-American men, one black man, a Jewish woman and an Indian man.

Several advocates we interviewed spoke of cross burning incidents in their communities, including a cross burning in the yard of a black family living in a rural area outside of Atlanta; and a cross burning on the lawn of a black family living in a predominantly white, working class suburb of Cincinnati. In Houston, the fair housing center and other advocates reported several complaints of harassment, including cross burnings, lodged by black and Latino home owners living in predominantly white neighborhoods.

Housing-related incidents reported included a firebombing of a home owned by an interracial family in Allegheny County (outside of Pittsburgh). An advocate in Atlanta described an incident that had occurred in a suburb thirty miles from the city, involving a white teenager who fired shots into a black family's home, narrowly missing one of the people living there. A Houston advocate described a racially-motivated altercation between a white neighbor and a black neighbor that resulted in the black neighbor's hospitalization.

Phoenix advocates noted that the influx of blacks and Latino families moving into predominantly white metropolitan areas around the central city had led to several racially-motivated incidents. According to an advocate we interviewed, local Phoenix officials worked with INS agents to sweep an entire suburb for illegal day laborers, harassing many legal and long time residents, and heightening tensions throughout the community.

Other types of high profile incidents described during the course of our interviews involved allegations of police brutality and other police misconduct. (While not directly related to the focus of our project, they were cited as examples of activity that heightened awareness of intergroup tensions.) An advocate from Louisville spoke of an incident involving an unarmed black man who was shot seventeen times by the police while he was sitting in his car. Another incident in Louisville that was described to us involved an agitated, mentally ill man who was fatally shot by four police officers in a local park. Omaha advocates described two local incidents involving white police officers who shot unarmed black males. In a high profile incident that occurred outside of Pittsburgh city limits, a black businessman who was prominent in the community was killed by police officers. At trial, the defendant officers were acquitted; one officer was promoted soon after the trial ended.

Because media coverage is a useful indicator of heightened awareness of community tensions issues, we also explored how these incidents were treated in the local press.

- In Cincinnati, the local media is considered to be an important aspect of the community tensions response strategy, in that it has helped raise public awareness, as well as place pressure on the police to enforce fair housing laws and investigate incidents when they occur.
- In Phoenix, the media tends to take a relatively evenhanded approach, according to advocates we interviewed. As one activist stated, "the media acts as a watchdog. Nobody wants to look bad in the paper."
- By contrast, in Louisville, many advocates believe that local media coverage tends to exhibit an inclination "not to ruffle feathers." Louisville advocates did note, however, that in the wake of the police misconduct allegations described above, the press has also alluded to systemic problems within the police department.

2. Community Tensions Response—A Varied Approach

We then tried to gauge the level of local response to community tensions incidents. Advocates were thus asked about their individual organization's response to the incidents they described, as well as other responses of which they were aware. We received a broad range of answers to this question.

a. Fair housing organizations

Because the focus of CommUNITY 2000 and our research is on housing-related tensions, we were particularly interested in learning about the role of the local fair housing agency in forming coalitions or partnerships to address the issue.

Of the ten cities studied (each of which have fair housing organizations), our research revealed only one–Cincinnati—where the fair housing center, Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), is at the center of community tensions response. HOME's approach includes a visit to the victim as its first step.

After gaining the victim's permission, HOME alerts the media (if they are not already aware of the incident), and contacts the police, constituency-based organizations, and advocates who will speak out on behalf of the victim and the community.

More typically, however the local fair housing center's role in the cities we studied was limited to referring cases to HUD for investigation, with little work done with the victim or the community.

In Durham, the local fair housing agency, while not at the center of community tensions response, has played an important role. In response to a string of burglaries in the homes of Latino residents, the executive director of the Fair Housing Center teamed up with representatives of the Latino community to educate the recent immigrants about their fair housing rights and remedies, and connect them with the local human relations commission, the police, and local attorneys. Additionally, the coalition met with the police to increase patrols in the neighborhoods where the crimes occurred, and eventually worked with a local community development institution to establish a credit union for Latinos.

b. Other organizations concerned with community harmony

We also asked about the responses of other groups concerned with community harmony, focusing on approaches that were not coalition-based or collaborative. The following responses are illustrative:

- In Houston, in response to anti-Semitic incidents in the schools, the Anti-Defamation League held a series of town meetings, school board meetings, and met with several area religious leaders.
- In Omaha, the NAACP focused their energy on police brutality issues following a high-profile police brutality case.

c. Collaborations (if any) among groups to address tensions

Beyond individual organizational responses to community tensions, we were most interested in organizational activities that involved collaborations with other groups, and any patterns that could be gleaned from the types of coalitions that had actually been formed.

Of the cities we investigated, the most comprehensive approach by far was the program spearheaded by HOME in Cincinnati. This approach relies heavily on HOME's strong working relationships with constituency based organizations, advocates, and government agencies. These institutions work with HOME as part of a network to aid the victim, make public statements, and enforce the law. Law enforcement is both a part of this network and at the same time held accountable for their actions by the network. Toward this end, HOME works with individual police officers, who are trained to train other officers in the Cincinnati metropolitan region regarding hate crimes laws, response, and victim care. The religious community also participates in this network through a broad based coalition comprising representatives of almost every faith in the Cincinnati area. The Cincinnati network relies

heavily on referrals. Response activities are delegated to the organization with the appropriate expertise, or with existing relevant programs.

Recent events in Cincinnati involving allegations of police misconduct have tested this comprehensive approach to addressing community tensions. These events underscore the difficulty of dealing with community tensions, especially where tensions are long entrenched.

Cincinnati's approach is unique in that the coalition-based approach there is an ongoing and sustained effort. By contrast, in other cities, the coalition-based efforts that were described to us have tended to be created to further a specific goal, and often do not continue after the goal has been achieved. Thus, for example, in Louisville, several groups organized a coalition to protest city officials' recent proposal to merge the sizable black city government infrastructure with the primarily white county government, a decision that was projected by some to result in the loss of a number of city jobs by the black community. However, this effort to block the merger was ultimately unsuccessful, and the coalition was eventually dissolved.

In several cities, collaborative responses and coalitions have been developed in the wake of incidents involving law enforcement generally, and alleged police misconduct in particular. For example:

- In response to the police incidents described above, representatives of more than 30 community organizations, churches, civil rights groups, and other advocates from the Louisville area, formed Citizens Against Police Abuse (CAPA). Today, CAPA meets twice a month and acts as a police watchdog organization, pulling together key constituencies to respond publicly when police-related incidents occur.
- In Omaha, the Commission on Community Relations was created in response to two high profile incidents of alleged police brutality. The Commission, which consisted of seven working groups focusing on such issues as education, housing, health, and the economy, but lacked the support of the mayor's office, was criticized by local advocates for failing to follow up after publication of its report on the incidents.
- In Phoenix, four civil rights organizations (the NAACP, the ACLU, the Anti-Defamation League, and the National Conference for Community and Justice) regularly meet with representatives from city and county government to discuss racial profiling as well as racial discrepancies in the criminal justice system.
- The Black and White Reunion is an initiative that was a direct result of a shooting in Pittsburgh. As part of this initiative, in January of each year, a conference is hosted by a local church to discuss black/white relations in the community. Through these events, a number of projects have been developed, including a school leadership project, a community art project, and a lawyers' task force on tenant/landlord disputes.

Our research also revealed that most of the inter-organizational collaboration occurs in reaction to high profile incidents of violence. This is true even in Cincinnati, the city with the most sophisticated

community tensions response approach of those that we studied. We did find that some areas were beginning to take a more pro-active approach, in support for state hate crimes legislation, for example, or for greater public education about hate crimes issues.

- In Houston, the Urban League, the League of United Latin American Citizens, the NAACP, the National Conference of Community and Justice, and others sent out informational material, shared mailing lists, and otherwise mobilized their constituencies to educate the public about the importance of passing state hate crimes legislation. Significantly, several advocates noted that much of the effectiveness of this coalition was due to the fact that the heads of participat ing organizations knew and trusted each other.
- In Atlanta, through the Georgia Rural Urban Summit, a coalition of fair housing advocates, civil rights groups, and religious leaders was formed, which served as the chief organizing force for passage of state hate crimes legislation.
- In Omaha, a local Hate Crimes Coalition was created through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance.

We also examined the role that fair housing agencies played in coalition-based community-tensions prevention and response. In most of the cities we studied (Cincinnati being a notable exception), the fair housing organization was generally not actively involved in any coalitions that may have been formed to address community tensions.

For example, in Pittsburgh, the fair housing agency was not contacted by, nor did it contact, other agencies regarding a response to the racially-motivated firebombing of the Allegheny County family's home. There are signs in Pittsburgh, however, that this trend may be changing. There, a local hate crimes task force—a coalition of civil rights, intergroup relations, fair housing, and other community organizations—has been formed through a HUD grant to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. The aim of this coalition is to address and resolve community tensions in the Pittsburgh area. It is the hope of many in the greater Pittsburgh area that this task force will serve as an impetus for more effective collaborations to address incidents when they occur, as well as build community more generally.

We also found that in some other cities, the local fair housing group was beginning to get involved in efforts directed toward facilitating greater inter-organizational collaboration, even if not specifically directed toward community tensions. For example, in Omaha, the local fair housing center has committed itself to working with other agencies to ensure that fair housing needs are taken into account when housing issues arise in the community.

In short, the cities we examined represented a wide spectrum of collaborative approaches to tensions, with HOME's approach in Cincinnati best exemplifying the meaning of a comprehensive coalition model, and other cities such as Phoenix at the beginning stages. What could account for the low numbers of active coalitions to address community tensions issues? The next section examines the cross-cutting themes uncovered by our research that may provide some answers to this question.

Chapter IV. Cross-Cutting Themes

In this chapter, we explore the cross-cutting issues that were uncovered in the course of our research. These themes help explain the success (or failure) of effective inter-organizational collaboration in the communities we studied.

1. High profile bias-motivated incidents sometimes have the silver lining of catalyzing local coalitions, but more likely fail to serve as a catalyst to coalition-based response.

When we began this study, we assumed that high profile bias-motivated incidents might have the effect of triggering some sort of inter-organizational collaborative response. We found this assumption to be true in four of the cities we studied (Pittsburgh, Omaha, Cincinnati, and Houston), where vicious, violent hate crimes captured media attention as well as the attention of the community as a whole, leading to significant collaborative efforts in response to resulting community tensions.

Another issue that appeared to unify communities was police misconduct. In some cities (Louisville, Omaha, and Phoenix), incidents of alleged police brutality resulted in significant public outcry, discourse, and other collaborative action centering on the use of police power.

Our assumption proved to be unfounded in most of the cities we studied, however, where high profile incidents generally failed to catalyze a coordinated or collaborative response.

2. Unfortunately, high profile incidents that are generated by the police cause special problems since ideally, police departments should be represented in the coalitions addressing tensions, but often are not in cases involving police misconduct.

In Louisville, incidents involving alleged police misconduct has led to the creation of a coalition of more than thirty organizations, who have come together to demonstrate their outrage, call for more training for the police department, and more generally, give the community the power to hold the department accountable for its actions. The demands made by this coalition have met with much resistance from the mayor, several city aldermen, and the police department. However, even with powerful opposition, the coalition has had some formidable victories, which include mandating additional training for police officers and the creation of a civilian police review board.

High profile incidents generated by the police pose a special dilemma for those searching for reform or changes within the law enforcement infrastructure. On the one hand, working for a more efficient and community friendly police department may require constant battles with the police that perpetuate an "us vs. them" mentality. On the other hand, working with the police as an active and important component of community tensions prevention and response requires cooperation and collegial relations. Walking this narrow line can be especially difficult when an incident involving allegations of police

misconduct occurs, as the battle lines are almost immediately drawn. More generally, working for change within a large institution such as a major city police department can be particularly daunting.

Our research did uncover places where community organizations have made positive strides with respect to seeking change within the law enforcement infrastructure, alongside working with the police as a partner in the community. In Cincinnati, the fair housing center (HOME) has made contact with police officers who are committed to enforcing fair housing and hate crime laws as well as promoting community harmony. Not only do these officers take the message of HOME and other organizations to their more skeptical colleagues, but they also work with HOME to conduct trainings of officers in other police departments in the greater Cincinnati region. Having a Cincinnati Police Department officer participate in the trainings makes the information more credible to other officers, creating an important link between HOME and the CPD. This process thereby allows each constituency—i.e, the police department as well as victims of fair housing violations—to view the other as a partner and not an adversary.

Additionally, we found that the Omaha Police Department itself took a proactive approach to hate crime law enforcement. In 1998, eight members of the police department formed a hate crime training committee to train other police officers in the OPD about hate crime laws and investigations. The committee collected training materials from other police departments, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Department of Justice and others regarding recognizing and investigating hate crimes. The committee then conducted a training for the entire police department that covered federal, state and local hate crime laws; recognizing, investigating and filing reports of hate crimes; and gathering intelligence on hate groups and symbols. The committee is planning on conducting refresher trainings and incorporating the information into police academy training.

3. Paying attention to only the most egregious incidents (e.g, hate crimes or other violent incidents) is insufficient because community tensions can surface in unexpected or subtle ways.

As discussed earlier, we asked our interviewees about recent "high profile incidents" that had raised awareness around community tensions issues. The advocates we interviewed tended to focus on only the most egregious, violent, or controversial incidents in their communities. This was in contrast to our working definition, which defined such incidents broadly to encompass a spectrum of situations, ranging from non-criminal evidence of tensions to widely publicized hate crimes. We chose this broad definition because housing-related community tensions can come to light in ways that are unexpected or hard to perceive, and often do not involve violence or even a direct threat of violence.

Stated another way, while hate crimes can lead to community tensions, they can also be a reflection of simmering tensions in a community. Thus, in order to ameliorate community tensions, it is important for advocates to also focus on any community activity that raises tensions between groups, such as racially-motivated rallies, name-calling, and other incidents not rising to the level of a hate crime. Not only can these incidents be precursors for more egregious activity to come, they themselves can

send a message of fear and terror to their intended victims, as well as the broader community in which they live.

4. Coalitions must exist in opposition to a pervasive tendency for individual organizations to guard their "turf."

In several interviews, "turf" issues were mentioned as an impediment to the successful creation or operation of coalitions. Simply put, according to many of the individuals we interviewed, some organizations in their community have established a niche with respect to certain issues and are reluctant to allow other organizations to share in "their" work.

For example, in Pittsburgh, when asked the reason why the collaborative response to a Klan rally was not sustained after initial action was taken, one advocate stated: "People do not talk to each other unless something has happened…individual organizations have their own meetings, and don't meet with each other." This quotation is one of many from advocates across the country who highlighted a systemic problem that acts as an obstacle to more productive work. In Pittsburgh, however, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission is attempting to remedy this problem by holding regular meetings among advocates and organizations to formulate a comprehensive plan to address tensions.

In Richmond, one advocate mentioned that "Turf often gets in the way of working" in the area. She went on to note that an infusion of more resources is not always the answer, stating that "You can have an infusion of money and you just have a bunch of stronger groups fighting each other." This advocate emphasized the fact that while advocates must understand that it is in their best interest to collaborate with each other, "Many don't."

Several interviewees mentioned what they characterized as a chronic problem of organizations working within a vacuum. Thus, for example, according to many we interviewed, constituent-based organizations tended to deal solely with their membership, which does not allow for collaboration or a more broad based systemic resolution to tensions in the community.

On the other hand, this type of individual activity can have certain benefits. For example, in cases where different groups focus on specific sectors of the community, with ongoing communication, "maintaining one's turf " can evolve into an effective division of labor.

Thus, in Cincinnati, while the rich infrastructure enables each organization to focus on specific areas or issues, effective communication between the organizations prevents overlap, maximizes resources, and allows them to make referrals to clients seeking certain services. Thus, for example, with respect to bias reduction programs in the schools, the American Jewish Committee works specifically with middle and high schools on their "Hands Across the Campus" program, allowing an opening for HOME to work solely with elementary schools.

5. While collaborations of diverse housing institutions are difficult to create or maintain, broad-based community coalitions present even greater challenges.

Because the focus of CommUNITY 2000 is on housing-related community tensions, we were particularly interested in the types of linkages fair housing agencies were making, and in particular, whether they were able to connect both their issues and their organizations with the missions of other organizations in their communities.

Our field research revealed that most fair housing organizations have recognized that fighting to uphold the rights of individuals to live in the community of their choice free of discrimination requires more than enforcement efforts; education of the various sectors of the housing industry is also imperative. Accordingly, fair housing organizations view networking with real estate agents, banks, housing providers and managers, renters associations, and the like as a critical part of their mission.

Examples of fair housing centers that have made important linkages in their communities include the following:

- The Omaha Fair Housing Center has taken the lead in forming coalitions with advocates concerned with the connection between fair housing and other housing related issues. The Center has formed partnerships with the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission, which receives funding to participate in fair housing enforcement efforts, as well as with the Family Housing Advisory Center and other organizations that address homelessness, housing and the mentally ill, and affordable housing issues.
- In Pittsburgh, the Fair Housing Center works with housing providers and other members of the real estate industry to promote home ownership as well as fair housing, through housing seminars and expos.
- The Richmond Fair Housing Center works with local government, church groups, and the board of realtors on the research and writing of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing report required by HUD.

Yet, in many areas of the country, despite the clear connection between housing discrimination and housing-related community tensions, these linkages do not extend to institutions critical to effective community tensions response. Our research demonstrated that in most of the cities we studied, with respect to community tensions issues, fair housing centers tended to operate in isolation, neither reaching out to, nor contacted by, other organizations, even in the wake of bias incidents that were related to housing. The reasons for this varied from city to city. In some cases, the failure to connect was attributed by interviewees to a lack of staff or other resources necessary to make effective outreach efforts; while in other instances, the issue of tensions response was simply deemed by interviewees to be outside of the fair housing mission.

There are signs that in Houston, however, critical connections are being made. There, the Executive

Director of the Fair Housing Center of Houston has made initial contact with community based organizations, government agencies, civil rights organizations to create a task force to respond to community tensions. Significantly, this response contemplates the involvement of media, allowing for the task force to educate the community about their rights and offer some kind of public response. Acknowledging that this kind of organizing wasn't in and of itself new, the Executive Director told us that, nonetheless, "targeting housing is a new twist."

Cincinnati offers a model approach. As discussed earlier, Cincinnati employs a systematic approach to tensions response, which relies heavily on constructive working relationships among the various organizations, government agencies and advocates involved in this type of work. Whether the particular tension is housing-related, police-related, or related to the religious community, a cadre of organizations works together to create a coordinated response. In addition, the fair housing center remains actively involved in larger community issues, such as school desegregation, police-community issues, and hate crimes, and connected to the organizations that take the lead with respect to those issues.

Our research showed, however, that the problem of isolation is not unique to fair housing centers. In some cities, for example, language issues have served to inhibit the formation of pro-active and ongoing collaborations among diverse institutions. An advocate from Phoenix noted that while the Latino community is the largest minority community in the area, due in part to language barriers, there is often no Latino representation in the local coalitions that have been formed there. In Durham, language issues appear to impede coalition formation between Latino organizations and African American groups, as well as between Latino organizations and local governmental institutions.

We also found that in some cities, organizations and/or constituencies that are relatively new to the community are not always included in work conducted through constituencies other than their own. This appeared to be true for the Latino community in Durham, as well as for newer organizations like the fair housing center in Houston.

Finally, in some cities, coalition formation was impeded by the failure of certain sectors to take a leadership role, or to continue the leadership role previously taken. In Atlanta, for example, it was noted that the corporate community had stopped taking the lead in bringing together diverse coalitions, a role it had assumed in the past. And advocates in Omaha agreed that neither the business community nor local government were as involved in community tensions response efforts as they could be or needed to be.

Chapter V. Recommendations

For the most part, hate activity related to housing are the exception rather than the rule. For many communities, integrative moves by minorities are met quietly, without incident.

But any incident of hate causes enormous heartache for neighborhoods and communities. When housing-related hate incidents do occur, our research has revealed that the most effective counteraction will come through collaborative initiatives in our communities and neighborhoods that reach people where they live and engage people where they feel at home, physically, spiritually, and politically.

Accordingly, CommUNITY 2000 offers the following recommendations as a starting point for effective collaborations directed toward the problem of housing-related community tensions:

1. Collaborative efforts to address issues of housing-related community tensions will be most effective if they are broad-based in scope and include every relevant sector of the community.

While organizations such as the local fair housing center, intergroup relations organizations, civil rights groups, and other institutions concerned with community harmony are natural allies in efforts to formulate responses to community tensions, our research suggests that the most effective coalitions also include those who have a stake in the community more generally, such as houses of worship, local government agencies, law enforcement, and the business community. The media also plays an important role in this regard, serving as a useful indicator of public awareness of community tensions issues, and in the words of one advocate, acting as a "watchdog" when incidents occur.

Moreover, given projections showing vast suburban growth, there is a critical need for concomitant tools "for dealing with segregation and racial transition which can very rapidly transform a community."* Thus, to be most effective, advocates and institutions will need to reach out beyond their traditional constituencies within their areas, as well as beyond their geographical localities to formulate region-wide coalitions.

2. Maintaining communication among relevant community sectors is critical to effective inter-organizational collaboration.

Although the overwhelming number of people we spoke with in the course of our interviews expressed interest in, or recognized the importance of, maintaining good working relationships with other advocates in the community, the low number of collaborative efforts our research uncovered illustrates how difficult this may be to achieve in practice.

In some cities, groups keep connected through volunteer efforts for other organizations. Thus, for example, in Pittsburgh, the fair housing center has trained the staff of the local NAACP office to be testers. Similarly, in Cincinnati, the local National Conference for Community and Justice office uses staff of the fair housing center in their diversity trainings for the workplace, communities, and the like.

* Gary Orfield, Housing Segregation: Causes, Effects, Possible Cures. Cambridge: Harvard University, April, 2001.

Creating a community-wide communication system can help link organizations and staff within a community. Mechanisms such as phone trees, e-mail distribution lists, newsletters (offline and online) and web sites are relatively simple to create and can help facilitate communication and information exchange among advocates. These types of communication devices can also alert other sectors of the community when an incident occurs, serving as a catalyst for a more coordinated response. Moreover, through technology, advocates can accelerate the speed and ease with which information is shared, as well as extend dialogue beyond local boundaries. As an advocate in Omaha stated, the "single most effective thing was having a list-serv of people around the country" to talk to people around the nation about these types of issues.

3. Collaboration and coalition formation should extend to issues beyond community tensions response.

While response and counteraction efforts directed toward community tensions are important, attention should also be paid to the root causes of community tensions, to break down the barriers that separate us, and to foster greater understanding and mutual respect for difference. In most communities, there are many organizations that are concerned with such issues; the Anti-Defamation League and the National Conference for Community and Justice are just a few examples. Yet, on the whole, there appears to be a perplexing and unfortunate separation between on the one hand, organizations that can be thought of as promoting the highest ideals of an inclusive America, and on the other, fair housing groups and law enforcement institutions that seek to enforce the laws defining the baseline behavior around the inclusion we expect from everyone.

Organizations that offer programs on prejudice awareness, religious tolerance, and conflict resolution can play an important role in complementing the efforts of institutions primarily focused on enforcing rules relating to anti-discrimination efforts, equality of access, and public safety. In fact, when such collaborations and coalitions are active, not only are enforcement and inclusion efforts reinforced, they also combine to strengthen a community's collective commitment to cooperation and inclusion across many lines of difference.

4. Awareness of available local resources, key organizations, and important contacts is critical to effective coalition building.

In the cities with the most effective approaches to community tensions response, advocates and institutions operated in a coordinated fashion, rather than in isolation. This type of coordination requires ongoing awareness and utilization of local resources and organizational services. Through the coordination of these resources and services, the work that individual organizations have accomplished separately can be magnified considerably.

Coordinating resources may extend to funding sources as well. The philanthropic community can play a critical role in encouraging coalition-building by making it a priority to fund collaborations. In

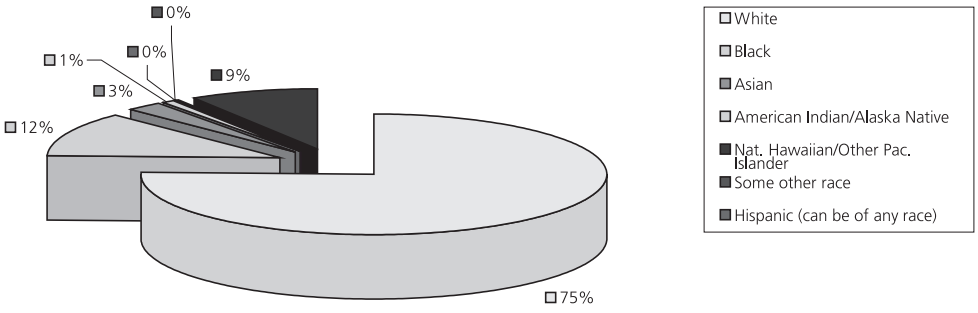
New Orleans, for example, the Baptist Community Ministries requires all grant applications to be collaborative in nature, sending a powerful message to local community institutions about the need to work together.

5. Developing comprehensive prevention and response strategies requires expanded resources at the local, state and federal level.

In almost every interview with advocates across the country, lack of resources was identified as one of the main barriers to the forming or expanding of coalitions. For example, fair housing organizations often have only one or two staff devoted to fair housing enforcement for an entire metropolitan region. Without greater capacity, they must often resort to very limited proactive coalition-building and preventative efforts.

Appendix B: Census 2000 Charts

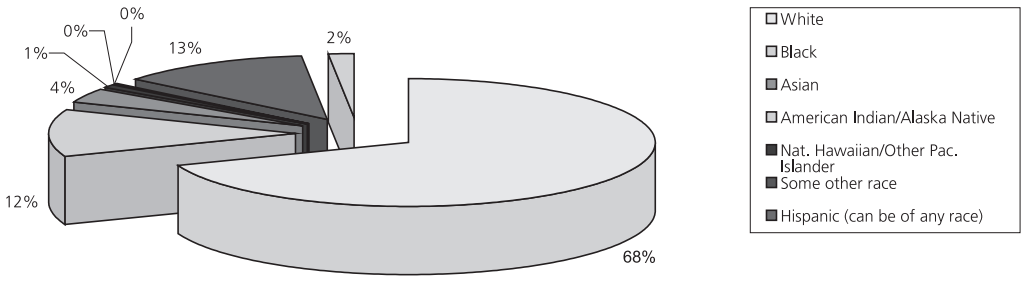
U.S. Population by Race & Ethnicity, 1990



Notes:
1. Hispanics can be of any race.
2. All races are displayed exclusive of Hispanic origin (e.g. non-Hispanic White).
3. The 1990 census did not provide an option to select more than one race.
4. Some race categories round to zero percent even though their numeric value is greater than zero.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 census.

U.S. Population by Race & Ethnicity, 2000



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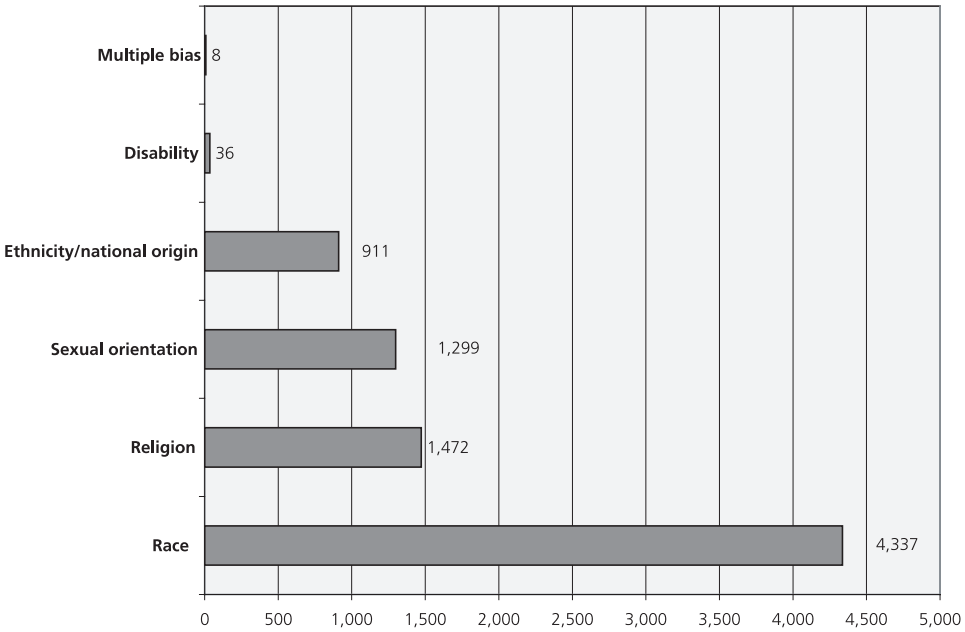
3. Except for the Two or more races category, the data reflect those who reported only one race.
4. Some race categories round to zero percent even though their numeric value is greater than zero.

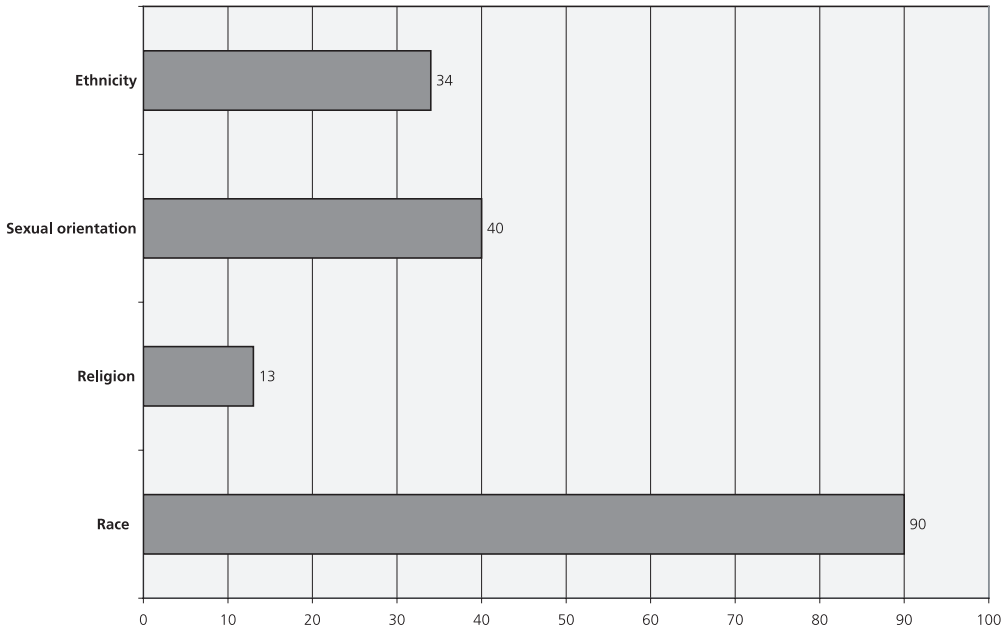
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

Hate Crimes by Bias Motivation, U.S., 2000



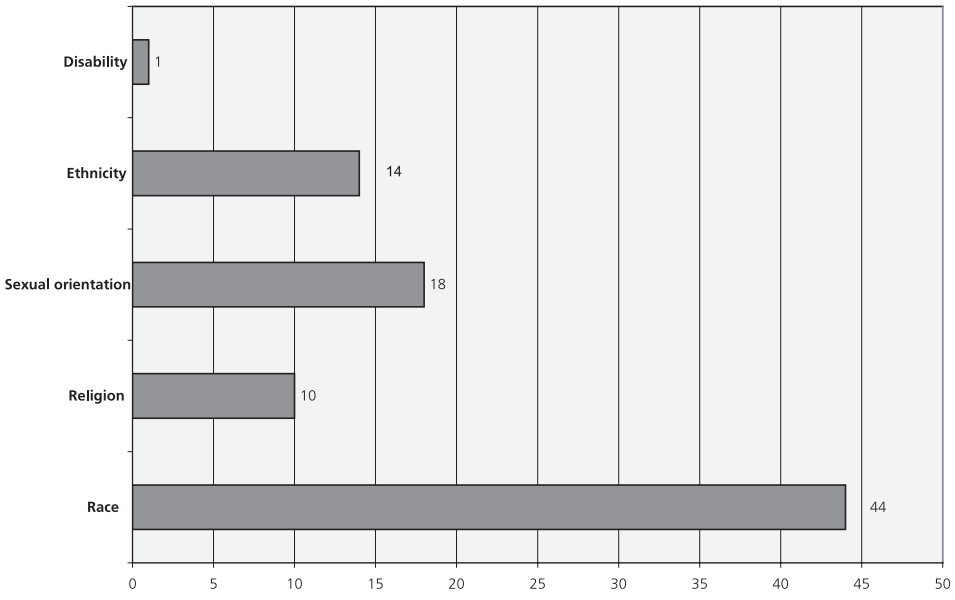
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2000.

Hate Crimes by Bias Motivation, Boston, 2000



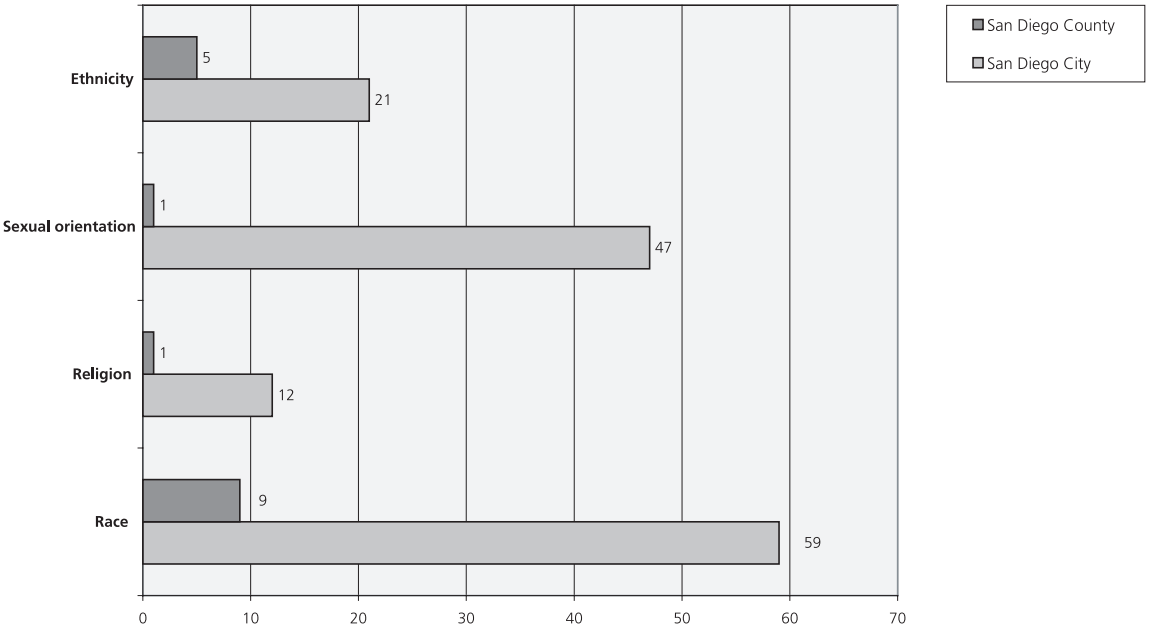
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2000.

Hate Crimes by Bias Motivation, Chicago, 2000



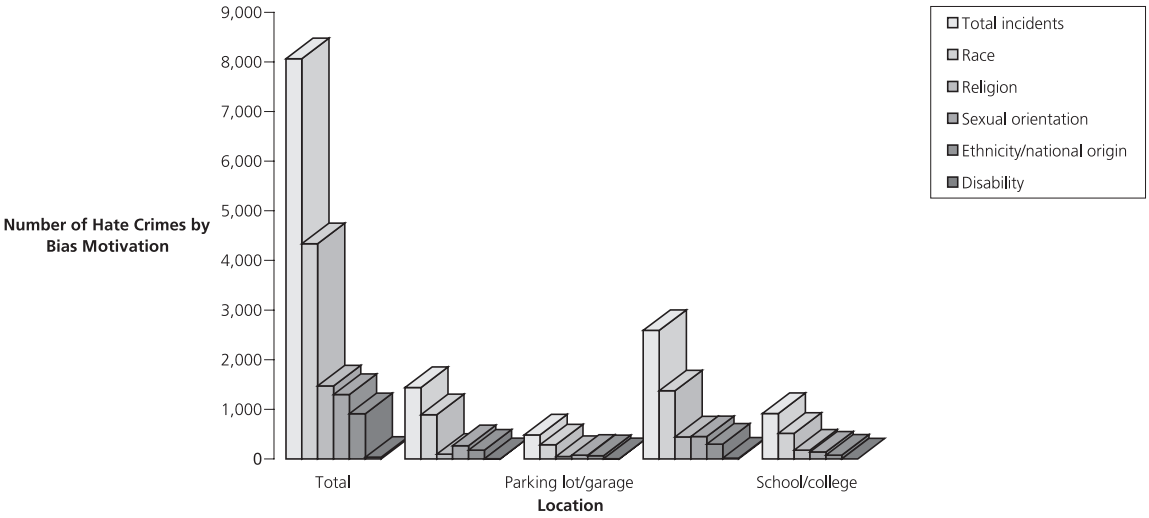
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2000.

Hate Crimes by Bias Motivation, City and County of San Diego, 2000



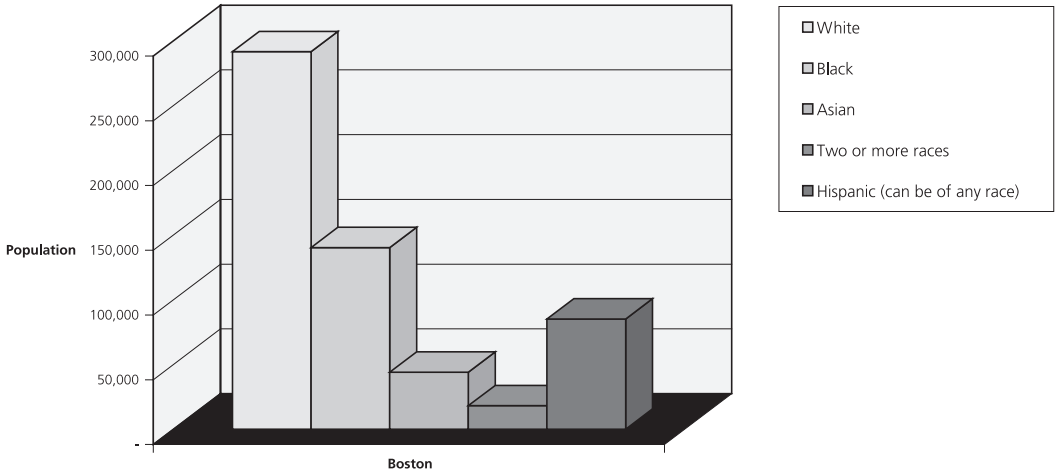
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2000.

Hate Crimes: Leading Locations by Selected Bias Motivations, U.S., 2000



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2000.

Race & Ethnicity, Boston, 2000



Notes:
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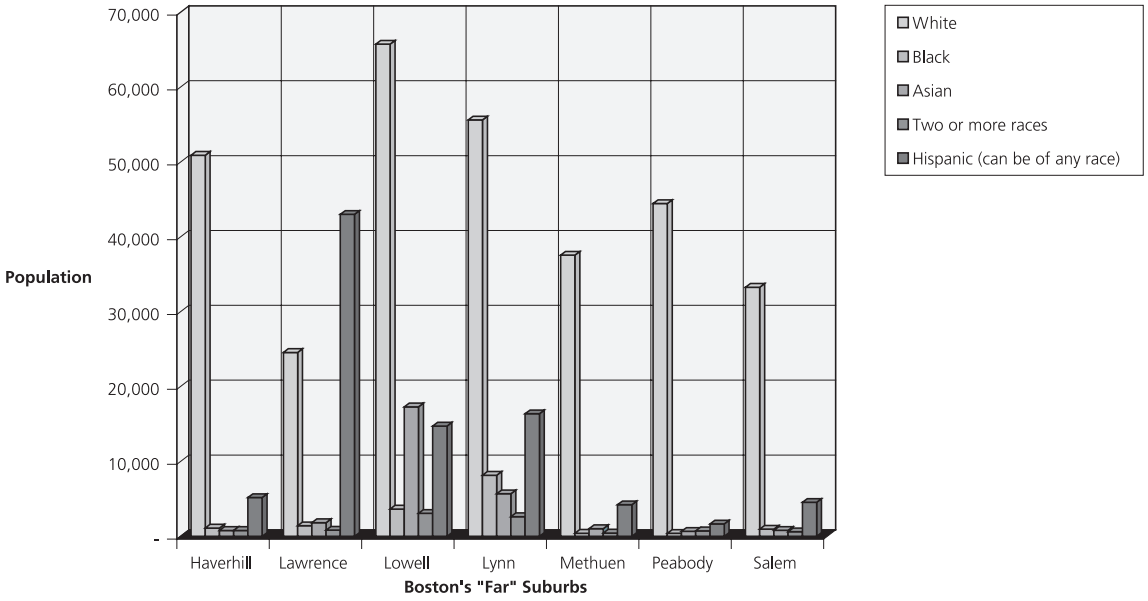
3. Except for the *Two or more races* category, the data reflect those who reported only one race.
4. Data for the American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race categories are not shown because they round to zero percent.

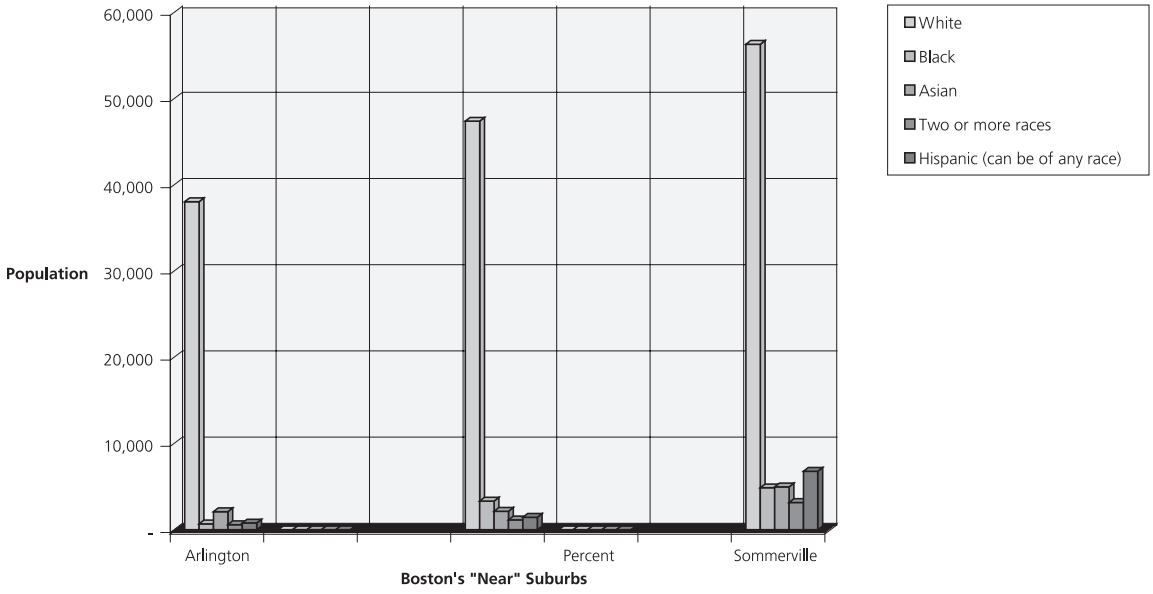
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

Race & Ethnicity, Boston's "Far Suburbs", 2000



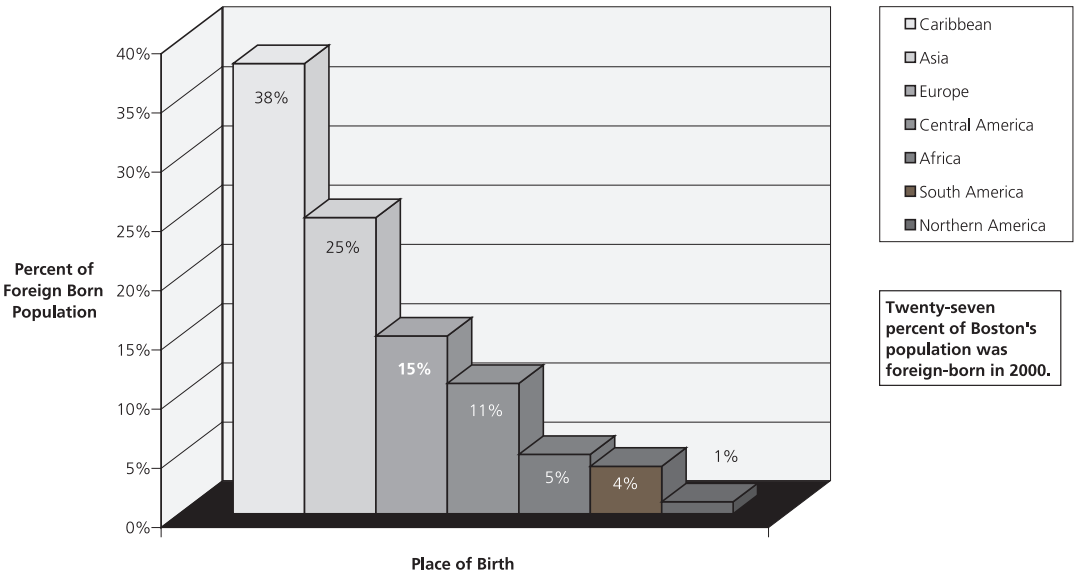
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

Race & Ethnicity, Boston's "Near Suburbs", 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

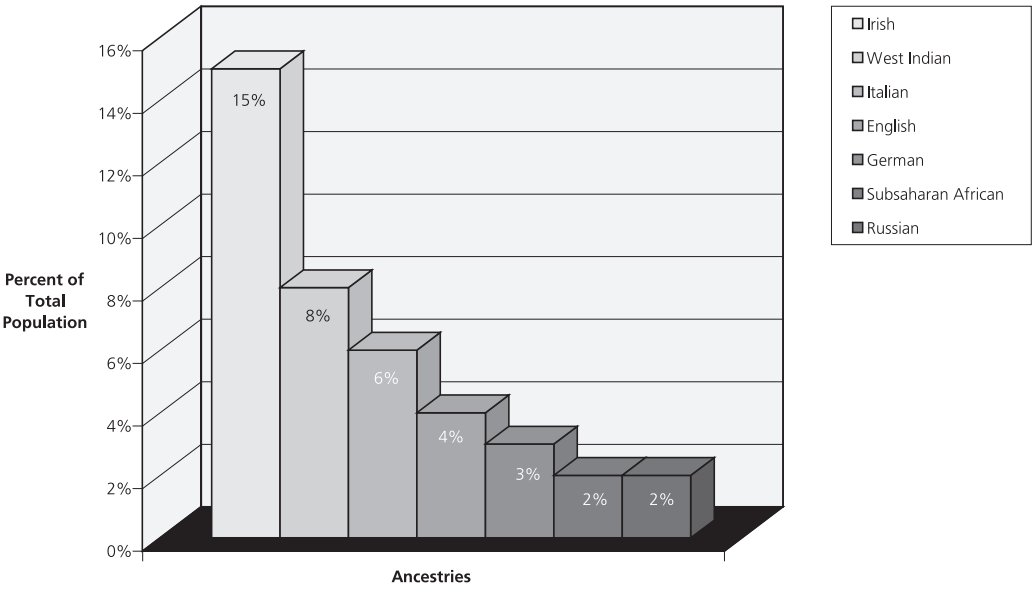
Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, Boston, 2000



Notes: The remaining one percent of the foreign born population is reported under *Oceania* , and rounds to zero.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 Supplementary Survey.

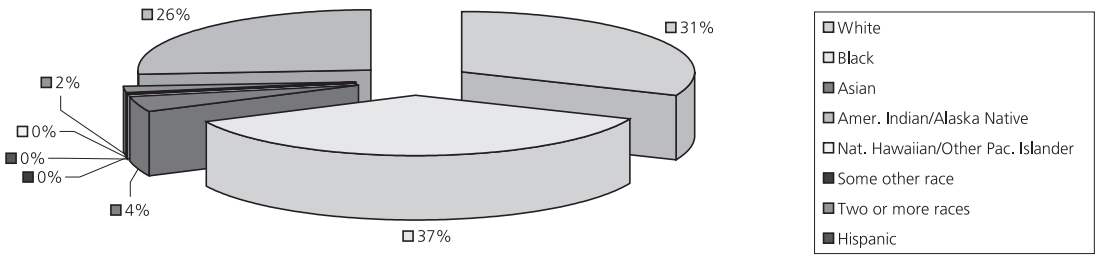
Leading Ancestry Groups, Boston, 2000



Notes: Three percent of the population reported their ancestry as "United States or American," a category not included in the chart.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 Supplementary Survey.

Race & Hispanic origin, City of Chicago, 2000



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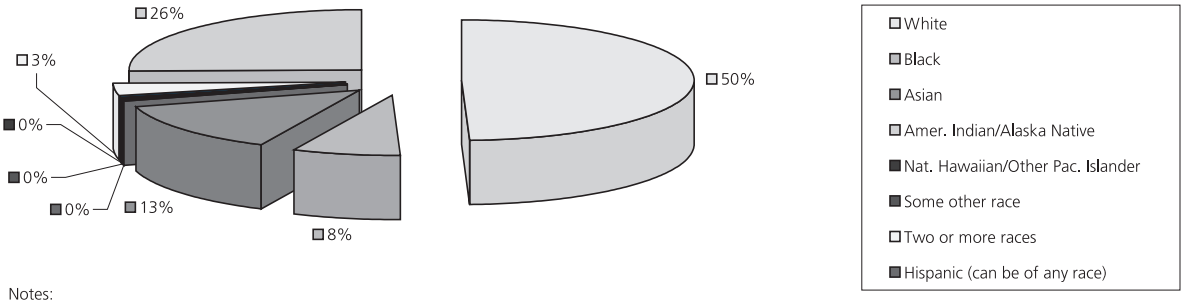
3. Except for the Two or more races category, the data reflect those who reported only one race.
4. Some race categories round to zero percent even though their numeric value is greater than zero.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

Race & Hispanic Origin, San Diego City, 2000



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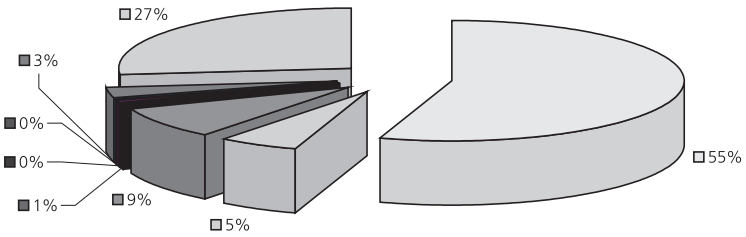
3. Except for the Two or more racescategory, the data reflect those who reported only one race.
4. Some race categories round to zero percent even though their numeric value is greater than zero.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

Race & Hispanic Origin, San Diego County, 2000



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4. Some race categories round to zero percent even though their numeric value is greater than zero.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 census.

LC CR Education Fund

Founded in 1969 as the education and research arm of the civil rights coalition, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF) promotes an understanding of the need for national policies that support civil rights and social and economic justice, and encourages an appreciation of the nation's diversity. LCCREF initiatives are grounded in the belief that an informed public is more likely to support effective federal civil rights and social justice policies.

Through its online newsletter, "This Week in Civil Rights"; special reports and curricula; briefings; and tracking of legislation, court decisions and executive branch enforcement in "The Civil Rights Monitor", LCCREF accentuates the vital relationship between the movement's storied past and the critical civil rights issues of today.

Through its public education campaigns on contemporary civil rights issues; its community tensions prevention and response initiative, CommUNITY 2000; its youth-initiated hate violence education and awareness program, Partners Against Hate; its highly acclaimed fellowship program for college students poised to become the next generation of civil rights leaders, Civil Rights Summer; and its Information/Technology/Communications initiative, which is educating the public about the importance of federal leadership in bridging the digital divide in low-income urban areas, rural communities, and Indian reservations, LCCREF has helped move the nation forward in its journey toward equal opportunity and justice for all.

www.commUNITY2000online.org

LCCR Education Fund
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