

FLORIDA COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS



2008-2009 WINTER UPDATE

We're All In It Together

40th Anniversary Kickoff: A Major Success!

On Wednesday, January 14th, FCHR Commissioners, Governor Charlie Crist, state and local public officials and community organizations joined together to kick off the Florida Commission on Human Relations' fortieth anniversary celebration.



Governor Crist and Commission Chair Dr. Donna Elam are interviewed by statewide media at the Commission's kickoff press conference

Governor Crist, Representative Geraldine Thompson, Senator Arthenia Joyner, Tallahassee Mayor John Marks, FCHR Chairperson, Dr. Donna Elam, and Vice-Chairperson, Gilbert Singer, spoke at the state Capitol about the importance of working together to create a better Florida.

"Discrimination is on the rise nationally and in Florida. While we are so proud of the accomplishments of the Commission, we must continue to come together to stop the detrimental discrimination that continues to plague our state," said Dr. Donna Elam, Chairperson of the Commission. "We look forward to working with Florida's public officials, businesses and communities to ensure that equal access and fair treatment remain on the forefront."

The press conference was covered by print, television, and radio outlets spanning from Pensacola to Fort Myers as well as by the USA Today.

Thank you to everyone who was attended this important event and helped to make it a statewide success!



Governor Crist speaks at the Commission's kick-off press conference

Retaliation: Did you know...

- Retaliation is the firing, demotion, harassment or "materially adverse" treatment of an individual who has filed a charge of discrimination, participated in a discrimination proceeding or otherwise opposed discriminatory action. "Materially adverse" is defined as an action that is likely to dissuade a reasonable worker from making or supporting a charge of discrimination.
- In the Commission's 2007-2008 fiscal year, **retaliation was the number one reason employees filed discrimination cases against their employer.**
- In addition to tangible actions such as firings and demotions, retaliation can include denials of salary increases, being put on paid administrative leave, refusing to allow an employee to attend training opportunities, giving a worker a demeaning task and saying it falls under "other tasks as needed," and moving people from a nice office to a "closet."

As part of the "Commissioners Speak Out" program, the Commission will soon be releasing an article on retaliation. Visit the "Commissioners Speak Out" page ([here](#)) to read articles on pressing human and civil rights issues and laws.

Women's History Month

Since 1987, March has served as Women's History Month. While much has been done in the advancement of women's rights, women still earn only 77.5 cents for every dollar earned by a man (US Census).

As we reflect on the many praiseworthy contributions made by women, it is important to realize that we must join together to continue moving closer to our goals of equality. The Commission dedicates itself to bringing to light important issues involving discrimination and inequality, and will continue to improve the quality of life not only for women, but for all in the state of Florida.

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

Honoring Black History Month

- 2/13 - **Black History** Saturday Family Program, Tallahassee
- 2/21 - TGS Annual Spring Genealogy Seminar, Tallahassee
- 2/26 - Tampa Bay Federal Agencies' **Black History** Luncheon "Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas" — Speaker Dr. Donna Elam—FCHR Chairperson
- TBA - FCHR Display & Children's Artwork, Tallahassee

For detailed information on February events, [click here](#).

ONGOING

PSA contest: The Commission's "Discrimination through the Eyes of Our Youth" PSA contest is open to all Florida students between 9th and 12th grades. [Click here to view more information and download contest materials.](#)

Partnerships: If your organization is interested in partnering with the Commission for an event, please contact Leah Barber-Heinz at 850-528-1597 or by email at leah.barber@fchr.myflorida.com.

The Florida Commission on Human Relations is the state agency which enforces the state's civil rights laws and works to prevent and eliminate discrimination through education and outreach.

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