

## 2013 Annual Report of the Human Relations Commission

### Membership and Attendance:

### Meeting Dates and Topics Discussed:

**January 2012:** The Human Relations Commission (HRC) invited Todd Sigler, Director of SIU's Department of Public Safety, to present on "Collective Behavior and Campus Public Order Policing." Sigler did his doctoral research on this topic, and was very relevant, considering there have been an increasing number of public demonstrations at colleges and universities including SIUC.

**February 2012:** At this meeting, the HRC invited Missy Greathouse from the Dispute Resolutions Institute presented on Resolving Conflicts Without Going to Court. They are a group of mediators who are sometimes appointed to help negotiate without having to go to court. Commissioners also briefly discussed issues surrounding the January "Polar Bear" and related events.

**March 2012:** In March, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority presented segments from the documentary film "The Color of Fear." Dr. Kathy Hytten, SIU professor in Educational Administration and Higher Education, introduced the film and facilitated a discussion. This program drew a large crowd, and a lively discussion was held after the film about racism and stereotypes.

**April 2012:** The HRC project group, Nonviolent Carbondale, presented their updates on the 11 Days for Compassion, an event planned for May 1-11, 2012. A few book clubs were meeting to discuss Karen Armstrong's book 12 Steps to a Compassionate Life, who started the Charter for Compassion movement. Diana Brawley-Sussman, Carbondale Librarian, helped put this second 11 Days event together with the help of a grant from the Fetzer Institute and American Library Association.

**May 2012:** During the public comments section, Dora Weaver and Breona Hawkins, a senior with the Girl Scouts, presented the "Music Mentorship Program for Southern Illinois." Breona's program would offer free music lessons to Southern Illinois kids. She is hoping to turn it into a non-profit organization. Since this meeting fell within the 11 Days for Compassion, the HRC showed a couple of videos on the Charter for Compassion, and the Compassionate Cities movement. The HRC discussed ways to make Carbondale a more compassionate city generally, and discussed the specifics of that program.

**June 2012:** For this meeting, the HRC met at the new Public Safety Center, and Commissioners got a tour of the new facility following the meeting. The main topic of this meeting was the Compassionate Cities program. Commissioners also discussed the goals of the HRC, and Chair Muldoon announced that he would be

leaving the HRC in August. The HRC has been around since 2003, and Muldoon was the last original member to still serve on the Commission.

July 2012: Commissioners continued the discussions from the previous meeting, on the Compassionate City project as well as on choosing a new Chair and Vice Chair. The Mayor also asked HRC to look into the issue of allowing video gambling in Carbondale establishments. The City Council would be voting on it, but he wanted the HRC to research it first.

August 2012: The Commission discussed the video gambling issue, with some guests from the Elks and Eagles Lodges in attendance, as well as a distributor of games. The HRC discussed some of the pros and cons to video gambling. Commissioners were split, but voted 3-2 to approve the ordinance and forward it to the City Council. Also at that meeting, HRC approved a motion to sign on to make Carbondale a Compassionate City. It was presented to the City Council in October.

The HRC also discussed talking to an organizational consultant, inviting the SIUC Office of Diversity and Equity to speak, and a response to joblessness, poverty, and crime. Commissioner Bradshaw was nominated to be the new Vice Chair and her name was forwarded to the Mayor.

September 2012: Meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum.

October 2012: Commissioners discussed the issue of crime in Carbondale, and decided to request more data from the Carbondale Police Department, as well as other policing agencies, per the HRC bylaws. Vice Chair Bradshaw was nominated to be Chair, and accepted, pending the Mayor's nomination. Commissioner Hennrich was nominated to be Vice Chair.

November 2012: Mr. Ellius Reed spoke during the public comments period, and raised the issue of the August 26, 2012 house party in town where the police ended up using pepper spray and arresting one woman. The HRC decided to have a big open forum at the December meeting, with students, university officials, city officials, law enforcement, and any interested citizens welcome to come.

December 2012: The HRC had a public discussion on the issue of house parties, African-American student, police, and community relations. Many issues were raised, such as racial profiling, accuracy of police departments, lack of places for black students to party, and students do not feel welcome. Commissioners discussed talking to various constituent groups, and following up at the next meeting.