



Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs

2013 Annual Report

Submitted to

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin

&

Joint Committee on Government and Finance

Submitted by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Message from the Executive Director.....	3
Vision, Mission, Values, and Goal Statements.....	4
Goal & Objective	5
Strategic Goals	5
2013 Highlights	5
Information Dissemination	7
Opportunities	7
Funding Programs and Services for Minorities.....	8
Planning, Delivery and Evaluation	8
Distribution of Resources.....	9
Recommendations	9
Summary	10

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am pleased to present the Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs (HHOMA) 2013 Fiscal Year Annual Report that reflects the tasks of the previous year. It is an honor and a privilege to work as the Executive Director of the HHOMA that functions as part of the Governor's Office.

In keeping with the spirit of the late civil rights attorney, Herbert H. Henderson, and his lifelong quest for equal rights for all human beings, I continue to work diligently in the ongoing efforts for basic human rights that foster equity for the minority citizens of this state.

Through the HHOMA, forums were held across the state to promote and facilitate open dialogue on issues that affect minorities in West Virginia, develop strategies that promote equity, and make recommendations on how we can improve the lives of minority citizens by improving programs and services that serve the needs of minority groups.

This annual report and subsequent reports highlights the continuous commitment to equality for minority citizens across the state who do not receive or have access to the programs and services that are readily available to others.

Respectfully submitted,

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VISION, MISSION, VALUES, AND GOAL STATEMENTS

MISSION: The Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs (HHOMA) provides a forum to discuss issues and concerns of minority communities, and assist with efforts to develop strategies to improve the delivery of services to minorities.

VISION: HHOMA envisions acceptance and involvement as Equally Qualified, United, Innovative, Transformers, Yearning (EQUITY) for equality in programs and services for minorities across the state.

DIVERSITY: HHOMA is committed to fostering diversity by encouraging and modeling an environment of inclusion where individuals' differences are respected, appreciated, and celebrated.

VALUES: HHOMA promotes the following values:

Integrity – We are committed to building trust with minorities through honesty, fairness, consistency, and follow-through.

Leadership – We are committed to supporting minorities in their quest for equity and equality.

Collaboration – We are committed to sharing knowledge and resources that builds statewide partnerships among minority citizens, government, and private entities.

Responsiveness – We are committed to providing programs and services in a dignified, respectful, nondiscriminatory manner.

Accountability – We are committed to prudently managing the activities of the office.

GOAL & OBJECTIVE

GOAL: The goal is to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature related to policies that affect the minority population of our state.

OBJECTIVE: The main objective of the HHOMA is to serve as an advocate to minority communities and as liaison to the Governor regarding issues affecting minorities across the state.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The HHOMA has six areas targeted as priorities for the office.

1. **Education** – Participate in discussions with the Department of Education, Higher Education Policy Commission and constituents to develop strategies to improve the educational outcomes for our citizens.
2. **Workforce Development** – Develop collaborative partnerships to foster the implementation of workforce development legislation.
3. **Minority Health** – Collaborate with the Department of Health and Human Resources and its Bureau for Public Health to establish, staff, and maintain an efficient West Virginia Office of Minority Health that will offer quality programs and services to minorities across the state.
4. **Social Service** – Facilitate collaboration among state, non-profit, public, and private sector agencies to identify the needs of minority communities, identify gaps in services, and develop strategies to provide needed services and programs.
5. **Justice** - Collaborate with various partners (i.e., adult and juvenile) to develop programs that promotes justice equity for minorities entering, serving sentences, and leaving the justice system.
6. **Economic Development** – Collaborate with federal, state and local government, and with the private and public sector to promote economic development opportunities and initiatives.

2013 HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Lakin Women’s Correctional Facility Tour (12/19/13)
- ❖ Federal Prison Camp Tour (12/12/2013)
- ❖ Bluefield State College Research and Development Corporation Partnership (12/2/2013)
- ❖ Martin Luther King Jr. State Holiday Commission reinstated with HHOMA Executive Director appointed as Chair (11/8/2013)
- ❖ South Africa Road Traffic Infringement Agency (10/22-24/2013)
- ❖ Guest appearance on Spotlight on Health Program to discuss Minority Health (10/28/2013)
- ❖ HHOMA’s Northern Panhandle Region Listening Tour Forum (10/28/2013)
- ❖ WV Division of Rehabilitation’s Ability Works Recognition Ceremony (10/16/2013)
- ❖ The Center for Organ Recovery and Education’s STEP AFRICA (11/4/2013) co-sponsored by HHOMA
- ❖ A Bright Economic Future for the Mountain State (9/3-4/2013)
- ❖ West Virginia State University Inauguration of Dr. Hemphill (9/21/2013)
- ❖ New River Community and Technical College Inauguration of Dr. Washington (9/21/2013)
- ❖ Veteran’s Council Meeting (9/27/2013)

- ❖ Partnership of African American Churches' Faces of Recovery Walk (9/28/2013) co-sponsored by HHOMA
- ❖ HHOMA's Day to Serve Project (Second Avenue Center-9/18/2013)
- ❖ HHOMA's Eastern Panhandle Region Listening Tour Forum (8/8/2013)
- ❖ NAACP 69th Annual State Convention (8/9/2013)
- ❖ HHOMA's Martin Luther King, Jr. 50th Anniversary Bell Ringing Commemorative Celebration (8/28/2013)
- ❖ African American Culture & Heritage Festival (8/16/2013)
- ❖ Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College's Girls Nite Out Speaker (6/7/2013)
Juneteenth Celebration- Black Presence in West Virginia – 1863-2013. (6/16/2013) co-sponsored by HHOMA
- ❖ Promise Scholarship Award Presenter (Bluefield High School-5/22/2013)
- ❖ Promise Scholarship Award Presenter (River View High School-5/22/2013)
- ❖ Promise Scholarship Award Presenter (Pikeview High School-5/23/2013)
- ❖ Promise Scholarship Award Presenter (Mt. View High School-5/23/2013)
- ❖ Reducing the Risk – Building Skills to Prevent Pregnancy, STD & HIV (5/18/2013)
- ❖ West Virginia State University Yellow Jacket 2013 Spring Commissioning Ceremony (5/10/2013)
- ❖ Bluefield State College Inauguration of President Krotseng (5/4/2013)
- ❖ Guest appearance on The Legislature Today Program to discuss the mission of the HHOMA
- ❖ Marshall University Multicultural Affairs Ivy Academy II (4/5/2013)
- ❖ CORE West Virginia Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (4/9/2013)
- ❖ HHOMA's first Minority Health Awareness Day at the Legislature (4/11/2013)
- ❖ WV Human Rights Commission 2013 Fair Housing Conference (4/29/2013)
- ❖ WV Higher Education Policy Commission Chancellor's Diversity Initiative Council (4/19, 9/13, 12/13, 2013)
- ❖ Read Across America (3/1/2013)
- ❖ Governor and First Lady's Annual Easter Carnival (3/23/2013)
- ❖ The Governor's 10th Annual Civil Rights Day (2/22/2013)
- ❖ HHOMA's Celebration of Diversity (2/28/2013)
- ❖ Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Committee Banquet (1/21/2013)
- ❖ Martin Luther King, Jr. Ecumenical Service of Commemoration and Celebration (1/21/2013)
- ❖ Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Luncheon (1/19/2013)
- ❖ Governor Earl Ray Tomblin Inauguration Ceremony & Celebration (1/14/2013)
- ❖ Williamson Branch NAACP Annual Branch and Youth Council Program (1/13/2013)
- ❖ Mercer County Branch NAACP Annual Birthday/Luncheon Honoring Martin L. King Jr. (1/12/2013)

Professional Development

- ❖ WV Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Conference
- ❖ State Public Health System Assessment
- ❖ WV Human Rights Commission Fair Housing Conference

Service

- ❖ Martin Luther King, Jr. State Holiday Commission - Chair
- ❖ Corrections Workforce Collaborative Initiative
- ❖ Reconnecting McDowell Member

Collaborative Efforts

- ❖ Department of Administration's Division of Personnel Website
- ❖ Department of Health and Human Resources' Bureau of Public Health's West Virginia Office of Minority Health (WVOMH)
- ❖ Head Start
- ❖ Higher Education Policy Commission's Diversity Initiative
- ❖ Human Rights Commission's Fair Housing and Civil Rights Days
- ❖ Military Affairs and Public Safety' (Department of Corrections)
- ❖ Partnership of African American Churches' Recovery Walk
- ❖ West Virginia Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- ❖ West Virginia Housing Development
- ❖ West Virginia State University National Center for Human Relations
- ❖ Workforce West Virginia

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Through weekly cabinet meetings, I interact with the Governor, Chief of Staff, General Counsel, each of the Cabinet Secretaries, Chancellors, Commissioners, and with the Governor's Senior Staff. I have bi-weekly meetings scheduled with the Chief of Staff during which we discuss items related to the HHOMA. I meet with the cabinet secretaries as needed to discuss current issues and the impact that each department has on minority communities. We continue to work together to keep each other informed and educated about each other's agency and to identify strategies for effectively dealing with minority issues. These meetings allow me to pass along credible, up-to-date information.

The HHOMA, in an effort to increase its presence throughout the state and provide information in a timely manner, launched the www.minorityaffairs.wv.gov website that provides information related to accessing programs and services beneficial to minorities. Forums, meetings, churches, workshops, public school systems, community and four- year colleges, community events, community services, newspaper articles, and television appearances are part of the networking strategy to raise awareness about the work of the HHOMA. Each of these venues allows the opportunity to distribute promotional information (i.e., business cards, bookmarks, and ink pens) to the attendees.

OPPORTUNITIES

I participated in numerous statewide meetings and forums in an effort to further identify and explore issues that minorities face. I sought to identify programs and services aimed at serving minorities. Discussions are ongoing to develop strategies that effectively address issues. There are a number of programs and services currently in existence that could effectively serve the minority population. For instance, the Department of Highways' Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program specifically targets the advancement of minorities who seek to procure contracts. The DBE is an example of the impact that a commitment of both human and financial resources can have when implementing changes needed to develop programs and services into culturally relevant programs and services. Programs such as this can have positive effects in the areas where minorities continue to experience inequalities. Programs such as the DBE can lower duplication of services, scarcity of resources, under-served, and in some instances un-served populations.

In traveling around the state, a common theme from minority groups was that opportunities to participate in programs and services are often under-utilized due in part to information not being disseminated and a lack of public awareness regarding programs and services. Another common theme was the absence of minorities in senior level positions and appointments, and in the procurement process. In an effort to promote workforce

diversity and equality, I started discussions with senior officials. Some strides are being made as evidenced by the Purchasing Division of the Department of Administrative looking to do a marketing campaign that targets minority and women-owned businesses. I continue to work with state agencies to ensure that programs and services are culturally relevant for the target populations.

FUNDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR MINORITIES

Funding has a direct impact on the caliber of employees hired and the types of programs and services provided. High employee turnover is often experienced in underfunded programs and services. When the success of projects hinges on grant funding, it opens the door for insufficient and/or lack of funding, job security, and scrutiny of the effectiveness and longevity of projects.

When funding is appropriated to implement a project focused on minorities, individuals are expected to seek additional funding to maintain the day-to-day operations of the program. While additional funding can have a positive impact on the ability to offer quality programs and services, the programs and services are available only as long as the funding is available. When additional funding sources cease to exist, there is a risk of reduction in human resources, the quality of programs, and ultimately, the closing of the program.

There are a number of instances where legislation is passed that addresses minority issues. Some of the legislation has a specific focus in terms of funding sources and location of programs and services. Because of the narrow focus, unintentional barriers may develop. A bill may pass that included the language “if funding is available.” In many instances, funding is unavailable at the time the bill passes, and does not become available over time. This can result in programs and services never being implemented.

PLANNING, DELIVERY AND EVALUATION

In an effort to provide programming that promotes diversity and cultural and ethnic sensitivity, there is a need for a concentrated effort to have a planning team that is culturally, ethnically, and regionally diverse. Such a team would include more than just racially diverse individuals. Relationship building to develop trust is a first step in the planning process. Needs assessments are critical to the planning of minority programs and services because they allow all stakeholders to have a voice in every aspect of the program or service.

Minority groups receive and participate in minority programs and services best when provided by individuals that resonate with minority groups. The individual does not have to be part of the minority group; instead, the individual must exhibit empathy and knowledge of the group. Having one person seen as speaking for all minorities does not lend itself to collaboration, partnerships, and widespread community building. Listening and following-up were reported to be two of the most effective delivery tools for use with minority groups.

Evaluation of minority programs and services is an area that needs closer examination. In looking at existing programs and services, the evaluation methods vary greatly because the information reported often lacks details, there is a lack of consistency in how information is reported, and the same evaluators examines the same programs year-after-year. This contributes to evaluator bias that tends to focus on more positive aspects of the program or service while downplaying areas that need improvement.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

Whether traveling around the state on listening tours, meeting with groups, organizations, or individuals, the discussion often includes comments about the unequal distribution of resources. The common sentiment is that resources are not distributed equally across the state as voiced by individuals in the Eastern and Northern panhandles and the Southern part of the State. Funding, programs, and services for minorities are often based on the geographic concentration of the majority of minorities. With population serving as the deciding factor, there can be an unfair advantage to less populated counties who have a high percentage of minority residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After meeting with individuals across the state to hear the issues minorities face regarding programs and services, it was no surprise that many of the issues were the same regardless of the area of the state. Based on information gathered from the Listening Tour Forums, meetings, and other interactions, I present seven recommendations for consideration:

1. Develop a diversity statement through the Office of the Governor in an effort to further build trust and confidence among minorities across the state. This shows the support and commitment of the Governor to diversity, equality, and equity for minority groups across the state. The development of a diversity statement and participation in diversity trainings illustrates a willingness to foster a diverse work environment. There is no financial cost associated with this recommendation; however, gaining public trust and support is invaluable.
2. Appropriate sufficient funds to ensure programs and services specific to minorities can be provided in an effective manner. This will reduce the elimination of programs and services due to the inability to secure outside funding.
3. Establish a grant administration office to assist with identifying, applying for and administering grants. Local, state, federal, public and private sectors, and foundations would be potential funding sources. The office would provide technical assistance to various state agencies regarding submitting proposals. By identifying current state employees who have skills and a proven record of accomplishments in this area, a skilled team can be assembled. Should a skilled workforce not be available through pre-existing staff, financial contracts with agencies who seek the office's services are one way to fund the office. This office would benefit agencies with limited resources.
4. Implement a statewide clearinghouse through DHHR to serve as an information and referral system for state programs and services. Non-profit, for profit, city, county, state, and federal agencies would list their information with the clearinghouse. Individuals throughout the state could obtain information about local, state and federal programs and services, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, contracts, small business development, workforce development, and procurement. Individuals could access current information regarding programs and services, services provided, areas served, populations served, and criteria for participation. A tracking system could generate statewide data regarding information dissemination, access to services, participation in services, and overall satisfaction with the information and referral clearinghouse.
5. Hold agencies responsible for enacting legislation to include funding programs and services whose target population is minorities. Require agencies to be open and transparent through regular updates regarding the status of funding. Convene stakeholder meetings to develop strategies for enacting

legislation. Examine current programs and services that may already address the needs and that will eliminate duplication of efforts and add no additional financial needs.

6. Finalize the establishment of the WVOMH and require sufficient financial and human resources be dedicated to the office to ensure that quality programs and services can be provided. Reportedly, the current funding level for the WVOMH is minimal and the office will have a staff of one person.
7. Monitor the Purchasing Division's targeted inclusion efforts focused on minority and women owned businesses.

SUMMARY

After extensive travel around the state, meeting with local, state and federal agency officials, community organizations, community leaders, groups, and individuals, it became evident that while some strides are being made there is still significant work to be done in terms of advancing the agenda of equality for minorities. There are some positive advancements to celebrate such as the more user-friendly updates to the Division of Personnel website, the establishment of the WVOMH, the online venue for minorities to submit information if interested in serving on boards or commissions, the appointments of minorities to boards and/or commissions, the identification of minority and women owned businesses throughout the state in an effort to specifically target the dissemination of information to keep them informed and in a better position to procure state contracts. While the successes may seem small, I am encouraged, and I encourage others to celebrate each small step as we continue to strive for diversity and equality.