

Agency Newsletter

GCHRC Receives over \$100,000

We are pleased to announce GCHRC has been selected as a 2017 Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) partnership organization. The FHIP program is managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is the only federal grant program whose purpose is to support private partnerships in preventing and overcoming housing discrimination.

“The FHIP grant is a transformational opportunity to expand our fair housing work and serve many more of Greenville County’s families who struggle with housing discrimination,” said GCHRC executive director Dr. Yvonne Duckett. “We are grateful to be recognized as a partner with this prestigious national program.”



Dr. Yvonne Duckett

GCHRC is committed to the equal rights of all citizens of Greenville County and will continue to work diligently to ensure all residents have access to safe, affordable and fair housing. If you or anyone you know believes they have faced housing discrimination based on race, religion, age, or disability, please contact our office immediately at (864) 467-7095 so that we may work together to eradicate all practices of this kind from our neighborhoods.

Upcoming Events

MAY 2017

- 5/11— Junita Butler Center
- 5/17- Freetown/Brutontown Community Centers
- 5/20 — Credit Smart
- 5/20 — Homebuyer Education
- 5/24 Anderson Library (Spanish Session)
- 5/27 — Credit Smart

JUNE 2017

- 6/17 — Credit Smart
- 6/17 — Home Buyer Education
- 6/24 — Credit Smart
- June TBA (Vietnamese Session)

GCHRC commits to the financial future of Upstate Veterans

*“As a United States Air Force Veteran it was difficult for me to budget my money when I first entered civilian life. I had always had allowances dedicated to housing and food. Thanks to GCHRC I was able to get my budget under control and start saving for my first home.
-S.Simmons, VA Client*

Greenville County is home to approximately 37,000 armed forces veterans and their families. According to a recent survey from the National Federation for Credit Counseling, veterans are almost twice as likely as civilians to have debt that carries over month to month (58%), and nearly the same number (55%) believe they are ill prepared for a financial emergency. This is not due to any fault of the veterans, it is because of a lack of financial literacy.

Entering the civilian workforce after years of military service requires veterans to learn all types of new skills, and we at GCHRC want to arm our veterans with the financial skills necessary to make their civilian lives as successful as their service lives. We are partnering with Greenville VA Outpatient clinic, HUD’s Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program, Upstate Warrior Solution, and Greenville County Veterans Affairs to bring free financial literacy workshops, first-time homebuyer education courses, and credit counseling to all veterans county wide. We are honored to serve those who have served our country. Contact us today at (864) 467-7095 for the upcoming class schedule; visit us on-line at <http://www.greenvillecounty.org/HumanRelations/>; or follow us on Facebook @GreenvilleCountyHumanRelationsCommission.



GCHRC staff participate in Volunteer Training at the Greenville Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic. All participants are now certified Veterans Volunteers

GCHRC Staff:

Dr. Yvonne A. Duckett,
Executive Director

Angelia Reeder, Administrative
Assistant

Gina Wong, Senior Case
Manager/Counselor

Deborah Ciufu, Case Manager
Counselor/SC Help

Sara Carter, Financial Literacy
(Bi-lingual) Coordinator

Ruby Black, Administrative Support

Michelle Sinacori, Bilingual/Case
Manager Counselor/SC Help

Greg Burgess, HECM Counselor

Ryan Thomas, Case Manager/
Counselor

Shantell Smith, AmeriCorps/
United Way

Finances For the Family is back!

With the help of our funders, our award winning program has helped over 365 individuals get on the right track with their financial future. A collaborative initiative of Greenville County Human Relations Commission and The Children's Museum of the Upstate, we work to empower families to work together to improve their financial stability through education, family discussion, and lifestyle changes. The class offers skills to help adults meet their savings goals, standards-based financial lessons for children, simulated learning using museum exhibits, a graduation celebration with financial incentives, follow-up sessions to monitor progress, and museum exposure for families facing hardship. We are thrilled to offer this program again in 2017 in both English and Spanish. Call (864) 467-7095 today to register your family.



Homebuyer 101 Graduates

Greenville Housing Authority & GCHRC team up for Home Ownership 101

GCHRC has partnered with the Greenville Housing Authority (GHA) to introduce the Homeownership 101 course. This program involves 8 hours of classroom based education centered upon credit and the home buying process. Beyond the classroom, each individual meets with a GCHRC housing counselor to complete an individual assessment and to formulate a clear and concise plan of action that will set them on the path towards homeownership. Course participants are current members of GHA's Family Self-Sufficiency program and upon completion of that program could be eligible to utilize their Housing Choice Voucher towards a home of their own.

In the last six months, eleven individuals have completed the Homebuyer 101 course, and one participant has already become a homeowner!

Since August, 18 individuals have participated in the program. One individual has purchased a home, and two other individuals are scheduled to close on homes this year. All HO 101 participants have raised their credit score and continue to receive one on one monitoring. GCHRC is excited to continue this partnership with GHA and is as committed as ever to assisting the individuals and families of Greenville County achieve their dream of homeownership.

SC Help keeps on helping!

SC HELP was launched in January 2011 to help responsible South Carolina homeowners who are struggling to make their mortgage payments stay in their homes during hard financial times. There is no cost to you to apply for SC HELP. Remember: If anyone asks you to pay for mortgage help, it may be a scam. GCHRC has trained SC HELP case workers on staff who are dedicated to helping you stay in your home. SC HELP provides monthly payment assistance, direct loan assistance, transition assistance, and modification/recast assistance. If you or anyone you know is at risk of losing their home please contact our office immediately at (864) 467-7095.

Our AmeriCorps

For the 2016/2017 service year GCHRC has been assigned an AmeriCorps Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA) to assist with the suitability and capacity building of our organization. Shantell Smith comes to GCHRC by way of Las Vegas, NV where she served 4 years as an Active Duty Member of the United States Air Force. Born in Denver, CO her passion for Greenville County began as a detention officer for Greenville County Detention Center.

“I just wanted to be actively involved in the community to try and change some of the things I could not while working in corrections. The mission of GCHRC aligned with my vision of eradicating poverty through education, financial literacy, and home ownership. I’m very glad to be here.”



Fair Housing Compliance 2017



Each year GCHRC holds an annual Fair Housing Compliance Training event to help educate our local housing community on new rules and regulations enacted by the United States Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Fair Housing Act of 1968 is enormously complex and far-reaching, it prohibits discrimination concerning the sale, rental and financing of

housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex. The staff of GCHRC from its inception has been committed to eradicating discriminatory practices in our community, be it housing or otherwise. This year's training led by moderators from the Greenville Housing Authority and BB&T included information for landlords, tenants, builders, mortgage providers, and real estate agents. Representatives from South Carolina Human Affairs, SC Department of Justice, and Housing and Urban Development brought their expertise on subjects ranging from basic compliance of fair housing laws to rights for ex-offenders and

2017 Commissioners:

Rosalind Banks

Brandi Campbell

John Dews-Alexander

Roberta Evans

Angela Huntley

Ethan Johnstone

Avery Martin

James Speed, Chairman

Gregory Williams Sr.

Greenville County Human Relations Commission

Greenville County Square
301 University Ridge
Suite 1600
Greenville, SC 29601-3660

Phone: (864) 467-7095
Fax: (864) 467-5965

www.greenvillecounty.org/humanrelations

Mission:

To improve the quality of life in Greenville County by promoting positive community relations and equal opportunity



 Follow us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/GreenvilleCountyHumanRelations

Thank You!

GCHRC would like to extend a special thank you to our donors and program partners listed below.



Hollingsworth Funds



Thank You Volunteers!

GCHRC is grateful to our volunteers who support our Credit Smart classes, homebuyer education classes, community workshops, and Finances for the Family programs. If you are interested in volunteering, call our office to learn more.

Madeline Armstrong, Greenville County
Liz Berry, State Farm Insurance
Barry Blackwell, Reliable Home Inspections
Ryan Brown, Keable and Brown, PA
Luis Caicedo, First Citizens
Denise Frankin, GRI Century 21
Seth Gottesman, MLO, BB&T Mortgage
Mahler Nunez, State Farm Insurance
Miquel Sanchez, MLO, BB&T Mortgage
Amanda Smith, Resurgent Capital
Tameka Thomason, Keller Williams
Adriana Pizarro—Victor Realty
Lilliana Velasquez Sower—New York Life



United Way of Greenville County

*If your name is missing, please call us at (864) 467-7095 so that we can correct our records for the next publication.