



Office of
Equity and
Human Rights

Realizing Equity. Enhancing the City of Portland.



A New Director

After completion of a national search and an application review process involving stakeholders from the community and the [City of Portland](#), [Commissioner Amanda Fritz's](#) office announced on February 16th that [Dante J. James](#) will be the first Director of Portland's new [Office of Equity and Human Rights](#) (OEHR).

A Denver resident for almost three decades, Dante brings over 20 years of political, non-profit, and legal experience in the areas of social justice, civil rights, and government contracting.

Director Dante J. James officially took the helm on March 15th, 2012, and swiftly began the important work of connecting with community leaders, city bureau heads, and city council members to lay the foundation for the City of Portland's equity work.

Our Work

Last month, and with input from, the Creation Committee, [Commission on Disability](#), and [Commissioner Amanda Fritz's](#) office, [OEHR](#) adopted the following mission:

OEHR engages city staff and elected officials through education and technical support to recognize and remove race and disability – related systemic barriers to opportunity and access, thereby making equitable policies, programs, and practices an organizational priority.

Our vision:

All Portlanders thrive when city services are equitably administered and delivered.

To guide our work, we've defined equity as recognizing systemic and institutional barriers and creating access and opportunities that benefit all.

Realizing equity here at the [City of Portland](#) means making equitable policies, programs, and policies an organizational priority in all city bureaus and in the delivery of services to benefit all Portlanders.

Working in partnership with city bureaus and elected officials, the OEHR team will provide consultation on how to operationalize equity, education and training on equity, and offer policy recommendations so the City of Portland can begin meeting its equity goals.

In the coming weeks, OEHR will finalize its goals for the next three years and create a one-year work plan which lay out organizational priorities, focus, short and long term goals with measurable outcomes, methodologies, and timelines.

A New Team

Director Dante J. James leads the following team of dedicated, passionate, and experienced individuals.



[Muna Idow](#)
Marketing and Public Relations



[Patrick Philpott](#)
Coordinator – Disability Programs



[Ronault LS "Polo" Catalani](#)
Coordinator – New Portlander Programs



[Judith Mowry](#)
Equity Strategies and Initiatives



[Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou](#)
Coordinator – Equity Training and Dialogue Programs

The Comprehensive Plan

Portland's [Comprehensive Plan](#) is the key long-range plan that helps the [City of Portland](#) prepare for and manage expected population and employment growth, as well as plan for the major public investments to accommodate that growth. It provides direction for City decision-making on land use, transportation, sewer and water systems, and natural resource management programs, while ensuring that investments in major city systems are coordinated.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the vision Portlanders have for the future through a set of maps, goals and policies, and a list of capital projects. It is framed in broad terms, with the detailed refinements, such as specific zoning changes or the design of infrastructure projects, made in the implementation phase of the planning process. This policy framework provides the big picture of future growth and development in Portland, which will guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

The [Bureau of Planning and Sustainability](#) (BPS) will be convening [Policy Expert Groups](#) (PEGs) to begin the Comprehensive Plan Update. The purpose of the eight PEGs is to help develop, review, and provide comments to City staff on proposed policy recommendations for the Portland Comprehensive Plan Update.

The [Portland Plan](#) is the strategic plan for the [City of Portland](#) and sets long-range goals through Guiding Policies. [OEHR](#) is partnering with BPS to provide orientation sessions on equity for all the PEG members.

Judith Mowry from OEHR will serve on the Economic Development PEG and collaborate with members of the other PEG's that have equity expertise.

To learn more about this effort, contact Judith Mowry at: judith.mowry@portlandoregon.gov or 503.823.4431

New Portlander Programs

Russian Speaking Network
Community Integration Series graduation

April 14 was the concluding workshop of RSN's (Russian Speaking Network) 6-session community integration series *Crime Prevention Begins in Your Home*. [Commissioner Amanda Fritz](#) congratulated and awarded graduation certificates to 22 new Portlanders, then was asked by the almost entirely female civic empowerment group to share her experiences as an immigrant mother, a neighborhood activist, and an elected public official.

RSN Co-Chairs Natalya Sobolevskaya and Anna Volkova are 2008 graduates of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement's *Diversity and Civic Leadership Academy*, a program in Commissioner Fritz' portfolio. Great things are expected of these ladies.

The RSN training was in partnership with the [East Portland Action Plan](#), the [East Portland Neighborhood Office](#), the [Office of Neighborhood Involvement](#), [East Portland Police Precinct](#), [Bureau of Portland Parks & Recreation](#), and OEHR.



To learn more about New Portlander Programs, contact Ronault LS "Polo" Catalani at: ronault.catalani@portlandoregon.gov or 503.823.4426

Commission on Disabilities

On May 9th, Portland's City Council, unanimously voted to pass, the Portland Commission on Disability's (PCOD) [Model Employer of People with Disabilities](#) resolution. You can watch the video here: [May 9 City Council session](#). The Commission on Disability's [Employment Sub-committee](#), under the leadership of its chair Travis Wall, researched information, analyzed the data and compiled this proposal which was considered for adoption by City Council.

The proposal outlines what the [Commission on Disability](#) has learned, and its recommendation that the City of Portland become a model employer of individuals with disabilities.

The Commission on Disability, in collaboration with the [Office of Equity and Human Rights](#), is looking to work in partnership with the Mayor and Council to develop, implement, and evaluate a strategic plan for increasing the City of Portland's employment of people with disabilities.

[Commissioner Amanda Fritz](#) commended the PCOD for their diligence and hard work to produce the proposal and stated "this was an important step for the City of Portland" and she considered the Commission's proposal "an excellent example of work that will address issues of equity in Portland". The Commissioner further commented that she was "proud of the collaboration between the Office of Equity and Human Rights and Commission on Disability to bring this proposal to council".

[Commissioner Nick Fish](#) remarked that he "has had years of experience working with citizen advisory groups and commissions" and that the "PCOD is THE example of what a good model commission should look like; always focused and concise, with a clear vision, and a willingness to partner and build relationships with the rest of city government".

Through the implementation of this resolution, the equal opportunity provision of the [American with Disabilities Act](#) will be addressed, elements of the [Portland Plan](#) will be successful, and the City of Portland will diversify with a highly motivated and productive workforce.



Portland's Commission on Disability

For more information about the work of the Commission on Disability, contact:
Patrick Philpott - 503.823.4432 or patrick.philpott@portlandoregon.gov

Chaired by [Nyla McCarthy](#), the Commission on Disability meets every other month on the **2nd Friday 10am-1pm.**

It meets next on **June 8th** in the Portland Building:
1120 SW 5th Avenue Portland, OR 97204
Conference Room C

Human Rights Commission

The Portland [Human Rights Commission](#) (HRC) hosted a [Public Forum on Human Trafficking](#) on April 25th. The forum focused on foreign-born victims of human trafficking and included presentations from experts on the issue of human trafficking, including members of state and local law enforcement, as well as non-governmental partner organizations. The presentation also included moving personal testimony from a foreign-born victim of human trafficking.

The forum served to bring together the community to discuss and gather information on this important topic and will serve as the launching point for the HRC's [Human Trafficking Task Force](#) (HTTF). Members of the task force next will provide recommendations to the HRC on how best to proceed with the efforts of the task force and other resources.

The HRC's [Community and Police Relations Committee](#) is working in partnership with the Portland Police Bureau to develop training aimed at addressing the impact of institutional racism in the bureau.

As part of the HRC's community outreach efforts, several HRC commissioners helped present the 2012 Most Honored Elders awards at the [Asian Reporter Foundation's](#) annual scholarship awards banquet on April 27th. Additionally, the HRC's [Committee for Intergroup Understanding](#) (CIGU) is helping form a partnership with [Race Talks](#) the monthly community dialogue on race, which is held on the second Tuesday of each month at [McMenamins Kennedy School](#) in NE Portland.

Chaired by [Allan Lazo](#), the Human Rights Commission meets monthly on the **1st Wednesday 4-6:30pm** of each month.

The next meeting will be **June 6th** in the Commonwealth Building:
421 SW 6th Avenue Suite 500 Portland, OR 97204

To learn more about the Human Rights Commission, go to:
www.portlandonline.com/equityandhumanrights



Clockwise from top left HRC members: Allan Lazo, Donna Maxey, Hector Lopez, Donita Fry, Christine Rontal, and Damon Isiah-Turner at the Asian Reporter Foundation Banquet



April 2012 - HRC Human Rights Trafficking Forum