2011 Annual Report



R E S E A R C H A D V O C A C Y & S U P P O R T T O E L I M I N A T E RACISM

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# ERASE RACISM IS WORKING TO ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO RACIAL EQUITY

#### VISION:

Transformed, integrated communities in which no person's access to opportunity is limited by race or ethnicity.

#### MISSION

To expose forms of racial discrimination and advocate for laws and policies that help eliminate racial disparities, particularly in the areas of housing, community development, public education and health.

#### **ABOUT US**

ERASE Racism was launched in June 2001 as an initiative of the Long Island Community Foundation, incorporated as a New York State not-for-profit organization in December 2003 and completed the transition to an independent IRS Tax-Exempt organization in 2004. Prior to this, ERASE was a program run by New York Community Trust. Fiscal year 2011 represents ERASE Racism's seventh full year of independent operation.

#### FOCUS

The days of rampant and violent acts of racial discrimination, fueled by racial prejudice, in the United States and on Long Island have been curbed by civil rights laws. It is well documented, however, that skin color and ancestry are still used as the basis for discrimination--limited choices and inequitable treatment and outcomes, for example in matters such as public health, public education, housing and community development. In addition, many so-called "race neutral" decisions and policies in fact result in racial discrimination, produce racially disparate impacts and perpetuate patterns of discrimination. This reality underpins ERASE Racism's belief that:

- Civil rights laws must be enforced.
- Discriminatory policies must end.
- Inaction in regard to racial inequities is discrimination.

#### METHOD

ERASE Racism achieves its objectives by utilizing research, education, policy advocacy and civic engagement of Long Island leaders, community organizations and community residents of various ages and backgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ERASE Racism is not a direct services organization; however, we do respond to public inquiries for information about racism and make appropriate referrals.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

After more than a decade of working to eliminate barriers to racial equity, ERASE Racism has been successful in:

# Housing and Community Development

Long Island is one of the most racially segregated regions in the country and documented housing discrimination continues. Effective, local fair housing laws can help ensure that all people have equal access to housing and none are kept out of communities by discriminatory practices and policies. Thanks to ERASE Racism's leadership, research, policy analysis, persistent advocacy and support from its broad vocal constituency, in 2007 new fair housing laws and administrative enforcement systems were enacted in Nassau and Suffolk Counties with strong penalties for people who break the laws. Discrimination complaints can now be filed, investigated and "I see ERASE Racism as the go-to organization...taking a position of fairness for blacks, Hispanics and really all people. From my standpoint, ERASE Racism probably has the clearest vision of where to go with this, so I see it as a major factor in pulling together the constituency. I don't see another group that is more focused on this." --Marty Schwartz, Board Member Emeritus of the Long Island Community Foundation

resolved locally, at no cost to the victims of discrimination, based on the laws' protected classes, such as race, creed, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, religion, source of income, sexual orientation, age and marital status. In 2011 ERASE Racism continued to investigate structures, policies and practices that result in racial inequities, for example:

- To identify trends in residential segregation on Long Island, a regional demographic analysis was initiated, with assistance from Dr. John Logan, professor of sociology at Brown University and contributor to the demographic research supporting the case "United States ex rel. Anti-Discrimination Center of Metro New York Incorporated v. Westchester County Westchester".
- To better understand patterns of residential segregation on Long Island, ERASE Racism contracted with The Stony Brook University Center for Survey Research to conduct a survey of black Long Islanders. This is a follow-up to a poll that Stony Brook conducted in 2008 and probes more deeply into housing attitudes, residential preferences and causes of housing segregation among African Americans. In fact, it is the largest survey of black Long Islanders to include questions about housing-related issues.
- To update fair housing enforcement tracking reports for Long Island, FOIA and FOIL requests for data were sent to local, state and federal agencies that handle cases of housing discrimination.
- To further state-wide collaborations to affirmatively further fair housing, Ms. Gross was supported by the Ford Foundation and the Westchester Community Foundation to connect with non-profits in Westchester County to share her expertise in fair housing and racial segregation and to seek alliances for future actions expanding affordable housing and strengthening fair housing policies and enforcement.

# Influencing regional leadership

Civil rights laws routinely help block individual discrimination, but they are just one tool against the very tangible consequences of ongoing racial disparities in resources, opportunities and outcomes. To address these disparities, ERASE Racism has engaged thought-leaders and decision-makers on the topic of racial equity and helped key public organizations, such as the Long Island Regional Planning Council, The Long Island Regional "Thank you for your participation in and commitment to the important work of the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council. The resources and expertise that you brought to the table have made this initiative a success. The completion of the strategic plan marks a milestone in our ongoing effort to turn New York's economy around and I am grateful to have you as a partner in this exciting endeavor...I particularly appreciate your passionate and insightful thoughts on behalf of our distressed communities." –New York State Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in a letter addressed to Elaine Gross

Economic Development Council, The Long Island Index and The Energeia Partnership incorporate the achievement of racial equity into their policy priorities and activities. In 2011, these ongoing partnerships and specific activities continued. The past year also presented ERASE Racism with the unique opportunity to shape Long Island's Regional Economic Development Plan that earned the region \$101.6 million to grow the economy and create jobs. In July, Governor Cuomo appointed ERASE Racism President Elaine Gross to serve on the 22 member Long Island Regional Economic Development Council that was responsible for developing the plan. Accomplishments in the past year that encouraged regional leadership to support the goal of racial equity include the following:

• As a member of the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council, Ms. Gross succeeded in inserting equity issues into the region's Strategic Economic Development Plan to such an extent

that during the presentation of the plan in Albany the Selection Panel responsible for choosing four "winners" out of the ten regions made special mention of the extent to which Long Island had gone beyond what had been laid out in the RFP to prioritize benefits to "minority" communities and issues of equity. As an example, in the proposal scoring document, Ms. Gross fought hard and won the inclusion of the following scoring criteria: "Project increases the diversity of Long Island's housing stock by producing affordable non-age restricted multifamily rental housing that includes units with two or more bedrooms, that is affirmatively marketed and does not have residency requirements." This



was the first time that a Long Island public policy document has included language against geographic restrictions for affordable housing, changing the terms of the debate from will we be attentive to these matters to how exactly will we evaluate everything with an equity lens. (Link to the full LIREDC Strategic Plan:

http://nyworks.ny.gov/themes/nyopenrc/rcfiles/longisland/LongIslandsFutureEconomy.pdf)

- ERASE Racism gave a one-day session on structural racism to thirty-five participants of the Energeia Academy for Regional Stewardship at Molloy College. The diverse group of ethical leaders from Long Island's public, private and not-for-profit sectors participated in a discussion about the history of racism in the U.S. and the ways that past and current discriminatory policies continue to perpetuate racial disparities.
- ERASE Racism participated in the One Region Livable Community Collaborative. Elaine Gross served on the Organizing Committee and helped to shape the group's agenda, which includes fair housing and transit-oriented development.

# Changing public perceptions of race and racism

ERASE Racism has utilized an innovative outreach program to reveal how racial disparities continue to deeply affect people of color and the region as a whole. Its Race and Racism Dialogues have created an environment where talking about racism is no longer taboo and myths can be dispelled. ERASE Racism's training and consultation, conferences on public education and housing, and staff development in public schools have influenced individual and collective behaviors. In 2011 its educational events (not including those related to the Student Leadership Forum or the Education Equity Initiative) reached over 400 people: "After going through the [URT] experience I realized just how far I had to go and how much I had to learn. It's truly a remarkable experience. If you have a business I encourage you to send three, four, five of your employees. Remember this is not your mother and father's suburb anymore; it's changing so fast demographically that it's not even your children's suburb. And if you have a business and you want to make sure that everyone can work as harmoniously as possible...then you really ought to experience the Unraveling Racism Training." –Lawrence Levy, Executive Dean of the National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University

- Over 350 people attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Annual Benefit, which was both a fundraiser and an educational event. All of the honorees' remarks highlighted the urgent problem of educational inequities on Long Island.
  - The Abraham Krasnoff Courage and Commitment Award was given to Dr. Ruth J. Simmons, President of Brown University, and Howard A. Glickstein, Esq., civil rights pioneer and co-chair of ERASE Racism's Board of Directors. Both honorees spoke about education equity as the civil rights issue of this generation. Dr. Simmons, who is the first black president of an Ivy League institution, noted "Education is the critical component to eradicating racism and ending discrimination, and yet educational structures are contributing to the very racism and discrimination that education seeks to end." In his acceptance speech, Mr. Glickstein also spoke about the importance of providing a high quality education to all students and the dangerous effects of teaching students in a racially segregated environment.
  - ERASE Racism's Corporate Leadership Award was given to John D. Cameron, Jr., founder and managing partner of Cameron Engineering and Associates LLP and chairman of the Long Island Regional Planning Council, for his efforts to further racial equity in public schools. ERASE Racism's Corporate Leadership Award was also given to Omni New York LLC, for its efforts to significantly increase quality, affordable housing on Long Island. The award was accepted by Omni New York Managing Director and former Major League Baseball player Maurice "Mo" Vaughn.
- Thirty-three individuals participated in the two-day Unraveling Racism Training (URT), which continued to receive rave reviews from participants. Participants were drawn from: BOCES, Westchester housing organizations and foundations.
- In October, ERASE Racism led a training on structural racism for 15 members of Common Ground—a group of regional leaders dedicated to "engage all Long Islanders in the struggle for equality and the quest for social justice and unity."
- On April 27, Elaine Gross gave a presentation about segregation on Long Island and ERASE Racism's work to 15 members of the New York Market Radio Association.

# Educating and mobilizing Long Islanders

Creating racially integrated and equitable communities requires the collective efforts of Long Islanders of all ages and backgrounds. The ERASE Racism Partnership for Racial Equity is an important vehicle for building a broad base of support for its regional initiatives and for nurturing allies to increase racial equity through local actions where they live and work. In 2011 efforts continued to expand the constituency of racial equity partners, for example: "Your e-newsletter is a very informative tool to report on the educational and economic inequities on Long Island and the varied strategies to addressing them. Keep up this important work! –Fern Khan, Dean of the Division of Continuing Education at the Bank Street College of Education

- In February 2010 graduates of the Student Leadership Forum participated in a follow up workshop to play ERASE Racism's "Game of Real Life," which provided them with a fun way of understanding structural racism.
- On August 14<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Long Island hosted a premiere of the film, Suburban America: Problems & Promise. Ms. Gross was among the panelists along with Ronald Shiffman, co-founder of the Pratt Community Development Center; Bob Keeler, a Newsday editor; and Ron Rudaitis, the film maker. Fifty people attended the event.
- In September ERASE Racism launched a new website with updated content, new multimedia
  resources and interactive features with numerous ways to 'get involved' with the organization.
  Feedback about the site has been overwhelmingly positive. Many visitors have told us that the site is
  easy to navigate and the information is presented in a clear and accessible format. According to
  Google analytics, visitors now spend twice as much time on the site as they did on the previous
  website.
- On November 5, 2011, eighty-one students from seventeen different high schools attended ERASE Racism's third annual Student Leadership Forum, which was the highest attendance to date. The fullday workshop utilizes hands-on activities and videos to raise awareness about the history of race and racism in the U.S. and current-day racial disparities. The forum challenged young people to think about race not as biological, but rather as a social construct. Students discovered how years of discriminatory public policies and practices have created racial disparities that are often wrongly attributed to aptitude rather than differences in access to opportunities. The participants discussed current topics such as affirmative action, the concept of "post-racialism", the benefits of diversity, and the continuing problem of housing discrimination. Here are a few of the comments from participants:
  - "This was an eye opening experience, getting to hear opinions of kids my age in the same region, but [that] have different circumstances a town over."
  - o "It was a very solid program, both informative and inspiring."
  - o "I liked that I got to meet new people and realized everyone has to deal with racism."
- ERASE Racism increased its communications/civic engagement activities, including developing social networking pages on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and sending a monthly electronic newsletter with original content.

- Efforts to educate and organize an active constituency were further strengthened by appearances on television public affairs programs, coverage in newspaper articles and published opinion articles, which had the potential to reach thousands of Long Islanders:
  - In June, Newsday published an op-ed by Elaine Gross that made the case for education equity on Long Island. The article was widely recognized as a powerful piece; after reading it a number of people became involved with ERASE Racism's Education Equity Initiative.
  - As the result of outreach for ERASE Racism's Tenth Anniversary Celebration, ERASE Racism received coverage and interview opportunities from the following news outlets: Newsday, Port Washington News, Long Island Wins, The Plainview Old Bethpage Herald, News 12, The New Hyde Park Courier and The Long Island Herald.
  - In November, Elaine Gross was interviewed by WRHU about structural racism and an article that Ms. Gross had written about racial rhetoric in the Republican primaries.

# Attracting national attention

ERASE Racism's expertise and accomplishment have been recognized by national funders, including the Ford Foundation. It has produced significant statistical surveys and research reports, which have been presented at national conferences. ERASE Racism's work is a key example of how the region, which is infamous for its longstanding housing segregation, is now making strides to dismantle racial barriers. In 2011 recognition for its work continued, for example: ERASE Racism's eight years of substantial grant awards from the Ford Foundation are representative of the organization's stature in the national arena.

- On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Gross participated in a panel discussion on the topic of fair housing and ongoing residential segregation at New York Law School, sponsored by the Civil Rights Roundtable.
- ERASE Racism continues to receive media publicity that extends beyond Nassau and Suffolk Counties. In 2011 Ms. Gross was interviewed by Bloomberg News, WNYC's Brian Lehrer Show, POWER 105 and Blog Talk Radio.
- On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ms. Gross gave a presentation at a conference sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington DC. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Gross was honored with the Woman of Valor Award by the American Jewish Committee. Three-hundred and fifty people attended the ceremony.
- On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Elaine Gross took part in a panel hosted by the NY Civil Liberties Union about the connection between immigrant issues and discrimination against African Americans.

#### **Education Equity Initiative**

The unusually high number of school districts on Long Island, 124, which are overwhelmingly segregated both racially and economically means that low-performing schools are disproportionately affecting students of color. Given that education is the central factor for upward mobility in society, this situation predisposes racial and ethnic minorities to further disadvantage. The objective of ERASE Racism's Education Equity Initiative is to create racially and ethnically diverse, high performing public schools throughout the region. Throughout 2011, ERASE Racism succeeded in achieving the first step of the initiative—building a constituency of educators, policy makers, and community leaders that support the goal of education equity. For example: "As a passionate educational leader, who is very concerned with the pervasive educational inequalities that exist in the public education system for the growing minority student population situated in Long Island, New York, ERASE Racism's educational agenda has shed much needed awareness on this injustice and has revealed the "pink elephant" that so many have been afraid to discuss. ERASE Racism has created a forum for like-minded Long Island leaders to have the necessary dialogue to begin the development of a comprehensive and sustainable strategic plan that intends to confront institutionalized racism in public education by addressing equity and equality for all minority students attending Long Island public schools." RG France, Assistant Superintendent, Roosevelt Union Free School District

- ERASE Racism held two local strategy sessions on the issue of public school education. The sessions—one held in Nassau and the other in Suffolk—were open to the public and provided us with the opportunity to hear from Long Islanders about their concerns and hopes with respect to education reform.
- On February 14, 2011 ERASE Racism held a Regional Forum for Education Equity to address the question: "How can we deliver a rigorous course of study to all students in racially integrated schools and classrooms?" Fifty-three people attended the forum. After the participants viewed ERASE Racism's documentary A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS: Race and Education on Long Island, they attended a morning plenary with Roger Tilles, member of the New York Board of Regents, and took part in three concurrent workshops that proposed strategies for change. Ms. RG France, Assistant Superintendent of Roosevelt Union Free School District, led the discussion about the benefits of culturally responsive schools. Dr. Carol Burris, Principal of South Side High School, spoke about increasing academic achievement by eliminating tracking and offering a rigorous curriculum to all students. Dr. Thomas Conoscenti, President/Chief Economist of Thomas Conoscenti & Associates, made the case for school consolidation by town as a way to achieve integration at the school level and lower taxes. The closing plenary, led by Dr. Amy Stuart Wells, Professor of Sociology and Education at Columbia University, explained Long Island's education inequities in a national context, relating the region's racially segregated neighborhoods to national statistics that show an increasingly diverse, yet segregated, population.
- An Education Equity Working Group was formed that includes public school administrators, community
  activists and business leaders. The group had two initial in-person meetings in 2011 to discuss goals
  and strategies. Select members of the group also helped to develop a Disparity Index, which will be
  used to research differences in resources between school districts.

 Ms. Gross was invited to give a number of presentations about education on Long Island, which included screenings of ERASE Racism's documentary A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS: Race and Education on Long Island. The screenings had a total of 677 participants. Events where held at the following locations: St. Joseph's College (300 participants), SUNY Old Westbury (125 participants), BOCES Education Conference (150 participants), Community Church of Syosset (27 participants), two presentations at Hofstra University—a film forum with 75 people and a presentation on structural racism on Long Island with 50 people.

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\* Organizational affiliations for informational purposes only.

# ERASE Racism would like to thank those who support us throughout the year.

# Foundations/Funds 2011

- The Ford Foundation
- Greentree Foundation
- Levitt Foundation
- Long Island Community Foundation/Erwin P. and Pearl F. Staller Charitable Fund
- New York Community Bank Foundation
- The New York Community Trust Horace and Amy Hagedorn Fund
- Rauch Foundation
- Rauch Foundation John Wenzel

# **Corporations & Organizations 2011**

- 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
- Adelphi University
- Albanese Organization, Inc.
- Bayfront Development Group, LLC
- Briarcliffe College
- Cameron Engineering & Associates LLP
- Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling Services, Inc.
- CITI Community Development
- CMI Event Planning & Fundraising
- Community Advocates
- The Community Church of Syosset
- Concern for Independent Living
- C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University
- Davidow, Davidow, Siegel & Stern, LLP
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Suffolk County Alumnae Chapter

- D&B Engineers and Architects, P.C.
- Hofstra University
- Islamic Center of Long Island
- Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- Molloy College
- North Shore-LIJ Health System
- The NuHealth System
- OMNI New York, LLC
- Pall Corporation
- St. Joseph's College
- The Starling Group, LLC
- Stony Brook University
- Suffolk County Community College
- Touro Law Center
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# **Gifts In-Kind**

ERASE Racism is grateful to St. Joseph's College and D&B Engineers and Architects, P.C. for their generous donations of items and service.

# STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION DECEMBER 31,

2011	2010
2011	2010

# ASSETS

Current Assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	-	\$	37,913
Restricted cash and cash equivalents (Note 7)		159,926		186,919
Contributions and grants receivable (Note 7)		29,909		62,650
Prepaid expenses and other current assets		3,860		3,847
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		193,695		291,329
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation (Note 2)		2,503		1,543
Security deposit		6,969		6,969
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	203,167	\$	299,841
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
Current Liabilities:				
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	23,531	\$	22,691
Deferred revenue		12,312		500
TOTAL LIABILITIES		35,843	<u> </u>	23,191
Commitments and contingencies (Notes 3, 4, 6, and 7)				
Net Assets:				
Unrestricted		(56,737)		31,731
Temporarily restricted (Note 7)	-	224,061		244,919
TOTAL NET ASSETS		167,324		276,650
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	203,167	\$	299,841

#### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE (Note 3) :	<u>,</u>		
Contributions and grants (Note 7)	\$ 80,079	\$ 51,371	\$ 131,450
Registration fees	7,800	-	7,800
Consulting fees	16,188	<b>-</b> *	16,188
Other income	556	-	556
Net assets released from restrictions (Note 7)	72,229	(72,229)	-
Gross proceeds from special events	268,288	-	268,288
Less: direct benefits to donors	(62,669)	-	(62,669)
Net proceeds from special events	205,619		205,619
Total Support and Revenue	382,471	(20,858)	361,613
EXPENSES:			
Program services:			
Housing	93,766	-	93,766
Education	79,541	-	79,541
Healthcare	6,574	-	6,574
Public education/seminars	36,050	-	36,050
Partner	130,717	-	130,717
Racism research	7,321	-	7,321
Youth	12,472	-	12,472
Total Program Services	366,441	-	366,441
Supporting services:			
Management and general	70,064	-	70,064
Development	34,434		34,434
Total Supporting Services	104,498		104,498
Total Expenses	470,939		470,939
Change in net assets	(88,468)	(20,858)	(109,326)
Net assets, beginning of year	31,731	244,919	276,650
Net assets, end of year	\$ (56,737)	\$ 224,061	\$ 167,324