

# The Alliance

*Dedicated to promoting  
unity, justice, equal  
opportunity, ethnic  
awareness, cross-cultural  
understanding and  
appreciation for diversity*

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## Do You Have a Civil Rights Issue? Who Can Help You? ACEH to Hear Director of Holland's Human Relations Commission July 9

Al Serrano, director of the Holland Human Relations Commission, will lead an interactive program about the accomplishments and challenges of the commission, at the Friday, July 9, meeting of the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony.

**The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Holland Museum, 31 West 10<sup>th</sup> St, Holland, and is open to the public. (Note new location for this month.)**

This is your opportunity to find out:

- what this important city commission does—and what it can't do;
- what civil rights laws apply to its work—and which ones don't; and
- what you should do—or not do—if you need the commission's help.

The commission works in Holland to prevent discrimination in housing, education, employment, and public services; conducts activities that promote social justice and cultural understanding; and helps create positive relationships among residents.

Serrano is a lifelong resident of Holland whose parents moved here from Texas; the family lived in migrant camps during the summers. After attending Hope College and graduating with a bachelor's degree in education from MSU, Serrano has held positions with Upward Bound, Community Action House, and El Centro. He headed the Human Relations Commission from 1979 to 1992, and again from 1998 to the present.

People attending the meeting will also see the museum's current exhibit, "Smiles," featuring residents of diverse backgrounds.

ACEH was founded in 1999 to work for justice, cross-cultural understanding, and appreciation for diversity. For information, call 396-2201.

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*Save the Date: ACEH Park Potluck Aug. 8*

## Your Dues Support ACEH

ACEH warmly welcomes **Dustin Byrd** as a new member, and thanks renewing members **Tino** and **Lu Reyes**.

Please consider joining with Dustin, Tino, and Lu as we work to make West Michigan a place where all are welcomed. You can join or renew your membership as follows:

**Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years**

**Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years**

**Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year**

**Business: \$75.00 one year**

The ACEH fiscal year runs October 1 – September 30. In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Bin Lim, c/o ACEH, P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. To pay by credit card, go to our website [www.harmonyalliance.org](http://www.harmonyalliance.org), click on "Join Us" and use the secure Pay Pal system.

### *News about Members*

**Rev. Angela Taylor Perry**, pastor of reconciliation at Faith Christian Reformed Church in Holland, has been named to the national board of trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. She is a member of the ACEH board.

**Jack Hyde**, ACEH secretary, received the Distinguished Service Award from HASP, the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals, for his many contributions to the organization, including serving as chair of the communications committee.

**Bin** and **Lisa Lim** have welcomed a new granddaughter in Minneapolis. Keira Abigail Lim was born April 23.

\* \* \*

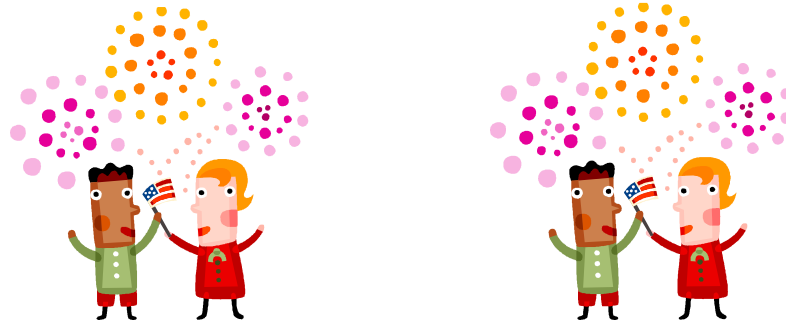
The Alliance sends sympathy to Virginia Wilson and the family of **Jack Wilson**, 76, who died in Holland June 3; Jack was professor emeritus of art history, Hope College.

Condolences from ACEH to **Ruth and Wayne Coleman** and their family on the death of Ruth's sister, Zina Johnson, 45, on June 8.

### Diversity Alliance to Offer Healing Racism Institutes

The Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance plans to offer two-day Institutes for Healing Racism in Holland in the coming months. Institutes are open to any community member, intentionally include people of differing ethnic backgrounds, and are led by trained facilitators. Videos, discussions, and cultural exercises are part of the two-day seminars, which many people have called "life-changing" with respect to their understanding of racism and its impact. Eleanor Lopez is the coordinator; contact her at (616) 994-2042 or [leonor349@gmail.com](mailto:leonor349@gmail.com) for more information or to sign up. The cost is \$100; some scholarships are available.

## Immigration: Myths, Claims, and Facts



The United States has had a complex relationship with immigrants and Congress has failed to enact comprehensive immigration reform. Myths and claims about immigration have overtaken the facts. DiversityInc, in its September 2007 publication, and the Immigration Task Force of the local 2008 Summit on Racism give us some answers. Think about these myths, claims, and facts as the U.S. celebrates the Fourth of July.

**The Claim:** Today's immigrants are different from those of 100 years ago.

**The Facts:** The percentage of U.S. population that is foreign-born is 11.5 percent. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was about 15 percent. (U.S. Census Bureau)

**The Claim:** Most immigrants cross the border illegally.

**The Facts:** Around 75 percent of today's immigrants have legal, permanent visas, and of the 25 percent who are undocumented, 40 percent overstayed temporary visas. (INS Statistical Yearbook)

### True or False?

**You want to immigrate to the U.S.?** A Mexican middle-class citizen with no family in the U.S., who submits papers to the U.S. embassy in Mexico City, pays the fees and waits out the processing time, should have no problem obtaining U.S. residency.

**FALSE:** There are specific categories for which you have to apply. If you have immediate family who are U.S. residents or citizens, they can submit papers on your behalf. If you are a highly skilled worker, you can apply for an H-1 visa (there are limited numbers of these). If none of these apply to you, there are virtually no other legal ways to immigrate to the U.S.

**So you want to bring your family to the U.S.?** A U.S. citizen who applies for U.S. residency papers for her sister in the Philippines can easily bring her here in about two years.

**FALSE:** U.S. citizens and residents who apply for immigration papers for their families in their home countries can expect a long wait. The current wait time to bring siblings from the Philippines is 22 years! The average of all countries is 11 to 12 years.

**Maybe I can't move to the U.S., but can I at least come visit?** A family from India decides to visit Disney World; they obtain their Indian passports, get on a plane, and at the end of the day they are at the Magic Kingdom.

**FALSE:** To get a tourist visa, most foreigners must be interviewed at the U.S. embassy in their country. In Mumbai, India, this takes 169 days.

**Would you like to know more about immigration issues? There is a five-week Faith-Based Seminar on Immigration at Our Lady of the Lake Parish, every Thursday in July from 10 a.m. to noon. It is based on a curriculum from JustFaith; cost is \$15 for books and materials. To register, contact Sr. Brigid Clingman, (616) 399-1062. Sessions are held at the church, 480 152<sup>nd</sup> St (just south of James), Holland.**

*The Alliance*

THE ALLIANCE FOR  
CULTURAL AND ETHNIC  
HARMONY

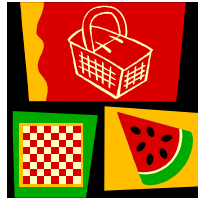
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*Bringing People  
Together from Worlds  
Apart*



## Come on Out to 12th Annual ACEH Summer Potluck Aug. 8

Fun, fellowship, great food, music, and activities—what a great way to spend a summer afternoon! ACEH is holding its 12<sup>th</sup> annual Potluck in the Park on Sunday, August 8, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Ransom Park on Holland's north side. The park is on Ransom Street north of Quincy, south of New Holland St., between 160<sup>th</sup> and 168<sup>th</sup>.

Everyone is welcome—invite your extended family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. It's a great way to connect with old friends and meet new people in the community. Please bring a dish to share, one from your own ethnic background if possible; ACEH provides beverages and table service. Bring along some lawn chairs, too.

**Volunteers are needed to plan, set up, and clean up** (you can pick one) for this event. To help, please contact Jauanna Jackson at 399-5322; Bin Lim at 335-8139, or Marvin Younger at 392-5086.

The Alliance for Cultural  
and Ethnic Harmony

Box 3007  
Holland, MI 49422-3007