

**NFCCJ / OneJax
Annual Report
October 1, 2006**

How does a regional office of a national organization become autonomous, more efficient and more responsive while improving programs and serving more of the community, all in its' first year of operation? In the case of the Northeast Florida Center for Community and Justice (NFCCJ), it was the result of hard work of staff and volunteers, and the strong financial support received from many other organizations, foundations and individuals.

NFCCJ was created when we separated from the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) on August 1, 2005. NCCJ's 87 years of national identity and 35 years in Northeast Florida proved that a group of people can make a difference by promoting tolerance and fighting bias, bigotry and racism. However, their financial problems followed by closure of the national office caused local concern as we attempted to address the needs of the Northeast Florida community.

A desire to take control of our programming, finances and responsiveness to the local issues spurred us on. We acknowledged that tolerance of others is no longer sufficient, respect and understanding of differences is essential for a unified community. Responding to problems as they occur may be appropriate in some cases, but proactive education and community building is more effective. Essentially, we dedicated ourselves to become the source of trust and an ethical center for our community.

During our first year of operation (August 1, 2005 to July 31, 2006), we identified what we used to do well, apologized for past shortcomings and made changes where they were needed. We cultivated a growing list of strong supporters and Board members who understood our challenge; we had to create an organization from scratch while maintaining the activities that were expected from our predecessor.

In not-for-profit agencies, there is usually a concern related to finances. Previously, NCCJ handled all financial issues from the national office. There was no local checking account. If another region or the national office were having a financial deficit, money from Jacksonville and other successful regions would pay for those costs. As a result, we had no money to fund our start-up and a funding cycle that would create annual cash flow difficulties. Some of these problems have been remedied; others continue to be addressed.

Here are some of our activities and accomplishments from our first year as an independent, local non-profit organization.

- Staffing –
 - Retention of Kathi Gram, Office Manager, who provides an institutional memory.
 - Hiring of Celeste Krueger, former Assistant Director and creator of Metrotown as Interim Executive Director.

--National search for Executive Director resulting in the appointment of Bobbie O'Connor as of August 1, 2006.

--Use of a "Consultant Model" for marketing and the role of Associate Director allowing more cost-effective services

- Programming –

--Interfaith Thanksgiving Service attended by more than 350, exceeding the previous five years COMBINED!

--Humanitarian Dinner. Part community education and part fundraiser, the value of strong programming was demonstrated by speaker, Dr. Reuben Brigety, Jr., a graduate of the first Metrotown class. Other activities were introduced to attendees and four community leaders were honored for their contributions.

--Metrotown was restructured for the first time in 15 years to provide a more timely and relevant experience to participants. The faculty was enhanced and more at-risk students attended than in prior years.

--LOUD (Leaders of United Diversity), an ongoing program for Metrotown graduates has been reactivated.

--Planning was completed for Interfaith programming and two programs were held in September, 2006. Our first "Oneness of Humanity" event was attended by 250 people, and the first community-wide Interfaith Dialogue in more than a decade had approximately 100 participants discussing the issue of public prayer in Northeast Florida.

- Ongoing public advocacy –

--Creation of preliminary advocacy protocol.

--Advocacy as a part of each of the programs listed above.

--Response to events consistent with our mission.

--Resource for print and electronic media.

- Strategic Planning –

--Three full Board retreats

--Twenty four hours of meetings of the Strategic Oversight Committee (seven Board members and two staff)

--Identification of unmet community needs

--New mission, vision, guiding principles

--New name and logo

- Operations and governance –

--Creation of a new 501c(3)

--Campaign to solicit funds for start-up expenses including the Weaver Family Matching Grant

--Identification of and resolution of technology deficiencies

--Search for permanent office space and move to new location

--Streamlining of procedures

--Searching to create more accurate databases

--Creation of protocols to make production of annual events more efficient

--Adjustment of Board membership to better reflect new mission and community needs

--Increased frequency of Board meetings and inter-meeting Board notification

- The things you don't see –

--Ongoing discussions and the development of partnerships with dozens of private and public organizations that will lead to future OneJax programs and activities.

--Resolution of community conflicts through a variety of private, behind-the-scenes techniques

I appreciate the support shown to NFCCJ/ OneJax during its' first year of operation. Thank you for allowing us to serve Jacksonville and all of Northeast Florida.

Sol G. Brotman
Chairman
NFCCJ/ OneJax
2005-2006