

## “Fair Housing: A Place to Call Home”

By Anna Jordan

Fairfax County is filled with thousands of houses, yet how many homes? People move to this area to experience the great houses, schools, and job opportunities, yet some people are still discriminated. Discrimination is the segregation of people because of their differences such as age, sex, color, religion, and more. When people lose the opportunity to buy a house because of discrimination, they feel hurt, like their rights have been taken away, and as if they don't matter to people. Fair Housing takes the feelings of discrimination away, making citizens and the general communities feel more respected and safe. I believe fair housing is a key part of any community, which is why the rules created should be followed.

Imagine buying your first house; excitement buzzes in the air as you step into the large home, trying to picture yourself living there. The homeowner sounded great on the phone, and you knew that this house would be yours. The seller turns the corner, and stares at you in the face- she would never sell to a Latino woman. You can see the hateful look in her eyes, but you have no words to say. Before you know it, you have lost your chance at the house of your dreams because of discrimination. Fairfax County had created an act stating that everyone should have a chance to house, no matter the race, origin, age, or sex. Feelings of pain and mistreatment echo in your head, because the only reason you couldn't buy the house was because of your race. Fair Housing rules were set up to avoid discrimination, yet you stare the feeling right in the face.

Next, people work hard so that they may afford a house. House buying is a major step in anyone's life; newlyweds, singles, blacks, whites, Catholics, and Atheists alike. It symbolizes accomplishment and hope for a successful future. While everyone in the world is different, the ideas for a good future are the same. There is also a difference between a house and a home. A house is simply a place to live, while a home implies something more natural and close to the heart. Just like people's ideas for a future, they have dreams for a home that they can rely on. If someone denies them these rights, they would feel as if the rights they had been taken away, leaving them unhappy with the community in which they want to live.

Finally, people begin to feel as if they don't matter if they are denied a home. Fairfax County created the Fair Housing Act to prevent these feelings within people. Why should one person's right to a home be more important than another's because of the race or religion? Fair Housing means that everyone is given the same rights to a home, which means citizens of Fairfax County *deserve* the same opportunities. Feelings of unimportance are prevalent in those that are discriminated against. The Fair Housing Act fights that feeling, turning it into confidence.

Savor the moments you feel wanted and accepted in your community. Fair Housing makes part of the feelings of happiness and content possible, by allowing people to feel happy, like they have rights, and as if they are wanted.