

27TH ANNUAL HOUSING RIGHTS SUMMIT

The Changing Landscape of Fair Housing
Advocacy, Agendas, and What Comes Next



EVERY APRIL, THE HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER JOINS FAIR HOUSING ADVOCATES ACROSS THE NATION IN CELEBRATING FAIR HOUSING MONTH AND THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSAGE OF THE FEDERAL FAIR HOUSING ACT.

**Presented by the
Housing Rights Center**

Los Angeles, CA
April 8, 2026

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"Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish yourself. It's what you do for others."

- Danny Thomas

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HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER

WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUALITY IN HOUSING

We thank you for all you do for our community.

- Robert and Marilyn Johnson

2026

Executive Director's Welcome

On behalf of the Staff and Board of Directors of the Housing Rights Center, it is my pleasure to welcome back our friends, honored guests, esteemed speakers and partners to the 27th Annual Housing Rights Summit.

Every April, the Housing Rights Center joins fair housing councils and civil rights groups across the nation in celebrating Fair Housing Month and the passage of the federal Fair Housing Act. Days after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in April of 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson and a divided Congress made it illegal to discriminate in the sale, rental, financing, and advertising of housing on the basis of race, religion, or ethnicity. This last great piece of civil rights legislation was passed quickly—partly to honor Dr. King's legacy, but also to extinguish the flames of outrage and despair illuminating our cities over his murder and the ongoing struggle of Black Americans to survive as poverty and racism surged.

Flames erupted again in January of 2025, when the Los Angeles communities of Malibu and the Pacific Palisades, the independent unincorporated city of Altadena and parts of Northeast Pasadena experienced horrific deadly firestorms that have altered those landscapes and will have a lasting impact on the housing and the communities that resided in them for generations. Altadena once had more Black homeowners proportionally than any other area in the nation due to redlining, sundown laws, government mandated racial segregation and violence in almost of the neighboring communities including Glendale, South Pasadena, Burbank, and Eagle Rock. In 1970, over 70% of Black households in Altadena were homeowners, nearly double the rate for Black households in Los Angeles County. Yet, Black households in Altadena disproportionately experienced damage or destruction due to the 2025 Eaton Fire and those same redlining ramifications. Black homeseekers displaced by the wildfire continue to report that they have experienced discrimination as they tried to secure assistance with their mortgage, new housing and different schools often where they weren't welcomed. In the Pacific Palisades, displaced Latinx homeowners and renters who lack the generational wealth and resources of their white neighbors report experiencing more difficulty in returning and rebuilding.

While our cities slowly recover from the 2025 fires, we also find ourselves immersed in an on-going but more dire fight to protect our immigrant communities, LGBTQ+ family members, low-income housing and homelessness prevention services and funding. The fight to save people from entering into homelessness continues with the Housing Rights Center taking a major role in administering rental assistance programs, filing litigation to combat discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders, and leading the lawsuit against illegal rental price gouging which escalated immediately after the fires despite a state of emergency prohibiting such greedy actions.

At this year's Summit, we will hear from our keynote speaker, esteemed scholar Dr. Manuel Pastor who will share his research and perspectives on the economic, environmental and social conditions that shaped and continue to impact our communities. Altadena advocates will share an update on their work and the state of the rebuild effort one year later. Our legislative and litigation panels will provide updates on tenant protection laws, mortgage and insurance laws, and challenges to fair housing investigations and enforcement. Director Eric Dyson will screen his new documentary which highlights the resilience of Altadena's diverse communities and the challenges they face. We will also recognize and celebrate Robert and Marilyn Johnson for their fifty plus years of fair housing leadership, unwavering support and overall contribution to the advancement of fair housing advocacy.



Thank you and again, welcome,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chancela Al-Mansour".

CHANCELA AL-MANSOUR

Agenda

morning

- 8:30 AM Registration & Check-in
-
- 9:00 AM Opening Remarks
Dennis Perez, President, Housing Rights Center Board of Directors
-
- 9:10 AM Executive Director Address
Chancela Al-Mansour, Executive Director, Housing Rights Center
-
- 9:35 AM Panel 1: "Fair Housing Federal Litigation and Legislation"
Scott Chang, Senior Counsel, National Fair Housing Alliance
Jarrell Mitchell, Deputy Attorney General, Civil Rights Enforcement Section, California Department of Justice
-
- 10:20 AM Morning Break
-
- 10:25 AM 2026 Fair Housing Justice Award
Robert and Marilyn Johnson
-
- 10:35 AM Film Screening *Altadena: The Heart, The Art, The Soul* and Q&A with the Director
Eric A. Dyson, Director
-
- 11:15 AM Panel 2: "From Disaster to Justice: Housing, Recovery, and Community Resilience"
Heavenly Hughes, Executive Director, My Tribe Rise
Rodney Leggett, Director of Litigation, Housing Rights Center
Jasmin Shupper, Founder and President, Greenline Housing Foundation

Agenda

afternoon

- 12:00 PM **Catered Lunch in the Courtyard & Resource Fair**
Music performance by **Rhythms of the Village Family Band**
Connect with **local community organizations** at the Resource Fair
-
- 1:00 PM **Keynote Address**
Dr. Manuel Pastor, Distinguished Professor of Sociology and
American Studies & Ethnicity, University of Southern California
-
- 1:45 PM **Coffee & Cookie Break**
-
- 2:00 PM **Panel 3: "Housing Policy and Tenant Protections
Legislative Updates"**
Ugochi Anaeberé-Nicholson, Staff Attorney, Public Interest Law Project
Javier Beltran, Deputy Director, Housing Rights Center
Cleo Bluthenthal, Policy Officer, California Community Foundation
Madeline Howard, Senior Attorney, Western Center on Law & Poverty
-
- 3:20 PM **Closing Remarks & Raffle**
-

Resource Fair

Make sure to stop by the Resource Fair at lunch to speak with representatives from local agencies and community-based organizations!



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Tag us on Instagram to share your experience!

Panel 1

Fair Housing Federal Litigation and Legislation



SCOTT CHANG

Senior Counsel, National Fair Housing Alliance

Scott Chang is Senior Counsel at the National Fair Housing Alliance. Before joining NFHA, he was Litigation Director at the Housing Rights Center, Counsel at Relman, Dane & Colfax in Washington D.C., an attorney at Brancart & Brancart and a sole practitioner.

The cases Mr. Chang litigated include: a precedent setting case establishing that fair housing organizations have standing in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and affirming a large damages award to a fair housing organization, *Fair Housing of Marin v. Combs*, 285 F.3d 899 (9th Cir.), a fair housing and hate crime case involving a group of Asian American Stanford University students who were intimidated based on their national origin when they attempted to rent a house and a disability discrimination case against a large city in which 4,000 affordable housing units will be made highly accessible for people with mobility and sensory disabilities.

He also testified before the National Commission on Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, an independent Commission charged with assessing the current state of fair housing in America and making recommendations for a revived federal commitment to fair housing.

Article: Fair Housing and Why It Matters to Ending Homelessness

Written by **Scott Chang**,
Senior Counsel, National Fair
Housing Alliance and **Saba
Mwine-Chang**, Managing
Director, Homelessness
Policy Research Institute

“The Fair Housing Act is a critical tool to ensure that people experiencing homelessness can get back into housing and maintain it in a safe and equitable manner.

With anti-discrimination measures in place for land use and voucher use, communities should leverage the protections of the Fair Housing Act to best serve people experiencing homelessness in their communities through Fair Housing Month and beyond.”

Read the full article at:
endhomelessness.org/blog/fair-housing-and-why-it-matters-to-ending-homelessness/





JARRELL MITCHELL

Deputy Attorney General, California Department of Justice

Jarrell is a Deputy Attorney General in the Civil Rights Enforcement Section (CRES) of the California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General. CRES enforces federal and state civil rights laws through investigations, litigation, and education to the public. CRES also represents the California Civil Rights Department and Native American Heritage Commission in legal proceedings and provides proposals and advice to the Attorney General on potential civil rights legislation. Jarrell's portfolio of matters includes enforcing federal and state law as it relates it to fair housing, education access, and anti-discrimination law, including litigation and administrative advocacy challenging unlawful federal actions in these areas. He currently serves as a co-lead counsel in litigation challenging unlawful changes to the federal Fair Housing Assistance Program and lead counsel for the state in a lawsuit involving new funding restrictions in HUD's Continuum of Care program.

Jarrell previously worked as a legal services attorney for several years at Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County (NLSLA) in its Re-Entry Clean Slate Initiatives practice, where he represented clients with criminal records in criminal record clearing hearings, employment and housing discrimination disputes, and in other legal matters related to re-entry. As part of this work, Jarrell engaged in impact/affirmative litigation and policy advocacy to increase housing access for people with criminal records and address other systemic barriers to reentry.

Jarrell earned his J.D. from Columbia Law School, holds a A.B. from Dartmouth College, and is a member of the California bar.

HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Our mission is to **actively support and promote freedom of residence** through education, advocacy, and litigation, **to the end that all persons have the opportunity to secure the housing they desire and can afford**, without regard to their race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, familial status, marital status, disability, ancestry, age, source of income or other characteristics protected by law.

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27th Annual Housing Rights Summit



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2026

FAIR HOUSING JUSTICE AWARD

27TH ANNUAL HOUSING RIGHTS SUMMIT

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Robert and Marilyn Johnson

Robert K. Johnson (Bob) is a true fair housing legend. For almost sixty years, he has been a leader in promoting equal access to housing by providing unwavering support to the Los Angeles fair housing movement. Bob Johnson co-founded the Hollywood-Wilshire Fair Housing Council in 1969 and the Fair Housing Congress of Southern California in 1970 where he served on the board of directors for decades and he serves on the board of the Housing Rights Center today.

Bob was instrumental in obtaining the initial governmental funding for the Fair Housing Congress from the city of Los Angeles in 1974 and from the County of Los Angeles in 1983. He and his law firm Munger, Tolles and Olson filed the first housing discrimination case in California under the Civil Rights Act of 1966, successfully obtaining an injunction. He was also instrumental in establishing the Brownlee Haydon Fair Housing Reward Fund in 1981 to combat racially and religiously motivated vandalism. In 1985, he was instrumental in establishing a nationwide Advisory Council of prominent academic scholars and practicing lawyers to advise the Fair Housing Congress in enforcing fair housing rights.

When the Fair Housing Congress merged with Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley Fair Housing Council, Hollywood Fair Housing Council and Westside Fair Housing Council to become the Southern California Housing Rights Center aka Housing Rights Center, Bob served on its Board of Directors where he continues to provide outstanding leadership.



Marilyn Johnson has joined her husband Bob in providing her unwavering and generous support to the Housing Rights Center, its predecessor agencies and the cause for fair housing for decades. Their joint sponsorship of twenty-seven years of Housing Rights Summits has provided hundreds of attorneys, advocates and community members with the information and tools they need to further fair housing for us all. As important as her sponsorship, Marilyn's presence at numerous Housing Rights Summits and events over the years has been immeasurably supportive and crucial to the legacy of fair housing in Los Angeles.

In recognition of their service and immeasurable contributions, the Housing Rights Center's annual Housing Rights Justice award will be named the **Robert and Marilyn Johnson Housing Rights Justice Award** going forward from today.

Film Highlight

Read the full article at:
pasadenanow.com/weekendr/altadena-story-before-it-could-be-forgotten-is-now-on-film



Altadena: The Heart, the Art, and the Soul (2025)



ERIC DYSON

Producer and Director

A native Angeleno, Eric A. Dyson has built a dynamic career in film and television, beginning with his training at Brooks Institute of Photography and early work with Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment.

Article: Altadena's Story, Before It Could Be Forgotten, Is Now on Film

Published by the Pasadena Weekendr.

"The Eaton Fire destroyed more than 9,400 structures. A group of filmmakers who were there decided Altadena's identity was not going to disappear without a record — and now their work is reaching festival audiences"



I've lived near Altadena for almost 30 years. Before the fire, all my routines — running, biking, hiking, even errands — took me there. I probably live half a mile outside the area, but it always felt like home. After the fire, the devastation was unreal.

What made it even more painful is that **Altadena was a hub for artists** — visual, performing, all kinds — and it became a strong Black enclave over generations. The loss isn't just physical; it's the people, the spirit. I used to pass folks on horseback, kids in front yards, people working on cars — everyone saying hello. That warmth is rare.

Even with gentrification and newer homes, that charm still draws people. One resident told me something that really stuck: "People don't drive through Altadena to get somewhere else — they come to Altadena."

My favorite moments of making this film have been meeting neighbors who are diametrically opposed either by race, socioeconomic or religion, but always seem to put a sense of community above their differences. **That's the spirit that will save Altadena — difference without division.**

Now, attention and resources are fading. Some people are still hopeful, but others feel forgotten. I'm trying to capture all of that — seniors, low-income families, and those with means who live side by side. **My hope is that the film helps people understand what made Altadena special** — what people loved and what they dream for its future. And maybe it sparks a bigger conversation: if the world could rally to help one small town, why can't we apply that same spirit to broader issues, like homelessness in L.A.? I want viewers to feel moved to act, even in small ways.

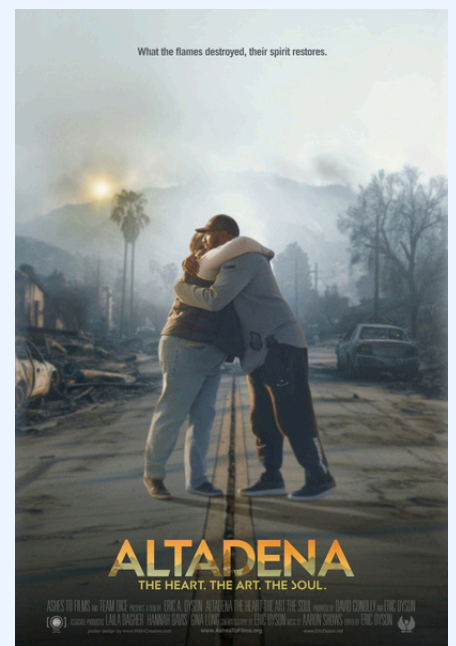


PHOTO: First United Methodist Church of Pasadena | [The South Pasadena](#) | "We Are Not the Disaster": Fire-Impacted Filmmakers to Showcase Stories of Resilience at Pasadena Screening

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in its mission to promote freedom of residence
and that all persons have the opportunity to
secure fair housing in our community.

Panel 2

From Disaster to Justice: Housing, Recovery, and Community Resilience

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RODNEY LEGGETT

Director of Litigation, Housing Rights Center

Rodney Leggett is the Director of Litigation at Housing Rights Center. He graduated from the University of California, Irvine School of Law and received his B.A. in political science from Howard University.

In the aftermath of the Wildfires, Mr. Leggett joined forces with community-based organizations to file the first private action filed by legal non-profits against illegal rent gouging since the fires began. The lawsuit aims to enforce compliance with California Penal Code § 396, which bans extreme price increases on housing and essential needs following state-declared emergencies.

Press Release: One Year After the Wildfires: Landmark Price Gouging Case Settled, Enforcement Affirmed

February 4, 2026

“As Los Angeles marks the first anniversary of the Palisades and Eaton wildfires, tenant rights advocates announced today that all defendants have settled in a landmark lawsuit brought to stop illegal rent price gouging in the wake of the disaster.”

“The case stands as a major enforcement victory for renters and nonprofit legal advocates seeking accountability under California’s anti-price gouging law.”

“The court confirmed that Penal Code § 396(b)’s price gouging protections apply to rental housing.”



In the aftermath of the wildfires, families who had already lost homes and stability were met with illegal rent hikes that preyed on their vulnerability.

Price gouging after a natural disaster exploits survivors and undermines recovery at the moment communities need stability the most.

Read the full press release at:
housingrightscenter.org/press-release/one-year-after-the-wildfires-landmark-price-gouging-case-settled





HEAVENLY HUGHES

Co-founder and Executive Director, My TRIBE Rise

My TRIBE Rise is a nonprofit that was founded in 2019 to take the stigma out of gangs and to educate people about the positive changes that are possible when people come together to end violence and meet the needs of Black and Brown communities. The vision of My TRIBE Rise is to create opportunities for peace through positive energy, fundamental relationships and shared social justice values.

Born and raised in West Altadena, founders Heavenly Hughes and Victor Hodgson quickly expanded the mission of My Tribe Rise to include projects that blend mutual aid (providing food, clothing, healthcare, and housing assistance) with efforts to end racial profiling, police and community violence, and other inequalities that impact communities of color in Altadena and Pasadena.



JASMIN SHUPPER

Founder and President, Greenline Housing Foundation

Jasmin Shupper is the Founder and CEO of Greenline Housing Foundation, a non-profit organization that seeks to close the racial wealth gap by granting access to homeownership for people of color and providing financial education, to ultimately reverse the effects of systemic racism in housing.

Jasmin serves on the Board of Directors of Harambee Ministries and Heritage Housing Partners in Pasadena, California. She was also appointed by the City of Pasadena to their 710 Reconnecting Communities Advisory Body. She holds a BS in International Business from Pepperdine University, as well as a California Real Estate Salesperson's license.

Keynote



DR. MANUEL PASTOR

Distinguished Professor, Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity
Director, USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute

Dr. Manuel Pastor is a Distinguished Professor of Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California.

He currently directs the Equity Research Institute at USC. Pastor holds an economics Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and is the inaugural holder of the Turpanjian Chair in Civil Society and Social Change at USC.

Pastor's research has generally focused on issues of the economic, environmental and social conditions facing low-income urban communities – and the social movements seeking to change those realities. His most recent (2024) book, Charging Forward: Lithium Valley, Electric Vehicles, and a Just Future (co-authored with Chris Benner), delves into the pivotal role of California's Lithium Valley in the "lithium gold rush" and its broader implications for climate challenges, justice, and democracy.

In recognition of his impactful work, in 2024, Pastor was named by the Los Angeles Times as one of the region's most significant civic leaders in their inaugural series, L.A. Influential.

Read the full article at:
latimes.com/la-influential/story/2024-06-23/manuel-pastor-usc-professor



Article: Manuel Pastor: Activist scholar bringing the streets to the ivory tower

Published by the Los Angeles Times

“In articles, books, lectures and research projects, he has examined the flash points of life in L.A.: the 1992 riots, economic disinvestment, social stratification, municipal corruption, media apathy and more.

His solution? Empower the affected through cross-cultural coalitions that involve everyone from students to City Hall. “

2026 HOUSING RIGHTS SUMMIT SPONSORS



The Housing Rights Center thanks our sponsors for their generous support of our mission for equality and justice in housing. Our work to advance the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement for fair and open housing can only be achieved in partnership with our committed community of supporters.

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THANK YOU!

Panel 3

2026 Legislative Housing and Tenant Protection Updates and Forecast

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MADELINE HOWARD

Senior Attorney, Western Law Center

Madeline is a senior staff attorney at Western Center on Law & Poverty focusing on fair housing litigation, unlawful detainer appeals, and issues impacting tenants in foreclosed homes.

Before joining Western Center in 2013, Madeline was a senior staff attorney with Bay Area Legal Aid in San Jose and San Francisco where she represented the interests of low-income tenants against landlords and major lending institutions.

At Western Center, Madeline partners with legal services attorneys on impact litigation to challenge discriminatory housing practices and preserve affordable housing. She also supports direct services attorneys through technical assistance and training on issues ranging from unlawful detainer appeals to fair housing rights.

Madeline received her law degree from Berkeley after working as an advocate at Medical-Legal Partnership Boston, the nation's first medical-legal collaborative. She went on to become a research attorney at San Francisco Superior Court before returning to direct services work.



UGOCHI ANAEBERE-NICHOLSON

Staff Attorney, Public Interest Law Project

As a Staff Attorney for PILP, Ugochi Anaebere-Nicholson focuses her work on homelessness prevention and protecting the rights of unhoused people. Prior to joining PILP, she served as Directing Attorney for the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Unit of the Public Law Center.

Ugochi brings over 20 years' experience practicing public interest law, including protecting the rights of tenants and those in need of affordable housing using litigation, administrative and policy advocacy, and coalition building strategies. Ugochi earned her BA in Political Science from UCLA, and her JD from Southwestern Law School.



JAVIER BELTRAN

Deputy Director, Housing Rights Center

Javier Beltran currently serves as Deputy Director for the Housing Rights Center. He previously worked at Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles as a Managing Attorney for the Preventing and Ending Homelessness Program and served as Managing Attorney for LAFLA's Santa Monica office.

Prior to LAFLA, Javier worked at Inner City Law Center (ICLC), litigating slum housing cases and defending tenants in eviction cases. He became ICLC's Directing Attorney for their Homelessness Prevention Department.

Javier received a BA in History from CSU Los Angeles and a JD from Southwestern University School of Law.



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FAIR HOUSING MONTH 2026

*Commemorating 58 years
of the Fair Housing Act*

If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identification), disability, family status, or any other characteristic protected by fair housing laws, please contact the Housing Rights Center at 1-800-477-5977 or by emailing info@housingrightscenter.org. For more information, visit www.housingrightscenter.org.

