

G R E A T E R
NEW ORLEANS



**FAIR
HOUSING
ACTION CENTER**

*Celebrating 10 years
of fighting housing
discrimination*

NEWS RELEASE

GREATER NEW ORLEANS FAIR HOUSING ACTION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 13, 2005
www.gnofairhousing.org

CONTACT: James Perry
jperry@gnofairhousing.org
205-276-2428

JUDGE GRANTS RESTRAINING ORDER IN DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT AGAINST CITY OF DENHAM SPRINGS

On December 12, 2005, Judge Tyson granted a temporary restraining order against the City of Denham Springs. The order restrains and enjoins the City of Denham Springs from seeking to stop Options Foundation, Inc. (Options) from continuing to operate its group home in the City. The Judge further set the case for trial on December 22, 2005.

The order is a result of a lawsuit filed on the same day by the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC), on behalf of Options, against the City of Denham Springs in Federal Court. The suit alleges that the City's refusal to allow use of a property as a residence for individuals with mental illness violates the requirements of the federal Fair Housing Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. The suit requests a temporary restraining order and/or preliminary injunction and permanent injunction to prevent the City from preventing the continued use of a Denham Springs property as a group home and from evicting its residents. The suit further requests permanent enjoinder of discrimination by the City, against Options.

Options opened the group home after Hurricane Katrina in an attempt to assist a group of Hurricane evacuees who have mental illnesses and who were forced to evacuate their New Orleans group home. Options chose the property in question because it had previously been used as a halfway house until May of 2005 and would likely meet their goal to provide housing to individuals with disabilities in a community setting.

James Perry, GNOFHAC Executive Director comments, "This is but the first step in our push to insure fair housing choice for tenants at the Options group home. We are hopeful that this early victory is an indicator of things to come."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

George Amedee, *Board
President*

Jayne Argentine
Cynthia Honore Collins
Ramona Fernandez
Lucinda Flowers
Anthony Keck
Calvin Kelly
Shelia Matute
John Penny

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

James Perry