

## **FAIR HOUSING CENTER ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT OF SALES DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT**

On Monday, December 13, 2005, an African American couple settled a housing discrimination lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. The settlement provided plaintiffs monetary relief in the amount of \$15,000.

The couple alleged in their complaint that they saw a home in Meraux, Louisiana listed for sale in the Times Picayune. The couple further alleged that when the wife inquired about the home for sale, she was told by one of the defendants that she could not buy the home because she is African American. The couple then contacted the Fair Housing Action Center, Inc. (FHAC) to file a complaint of housing discrimination. FHAC investigated the complaint through a series of tests in which African American and white testers inquired about the home for sale. FHAC viewed the testing as clear evidence of race discrimination. Specifically, FHAC alleges that the white tester was encouraged to purchase the home, while the African American tester was told that she could not buy the home because she is African American.

After conducting its investigation, FHAC referred the complaint to cooperating attorney Tracie Jackson, who filed the lawsuit and helped negotiate the settlement agreement.

According to James Perry, FHAC's Executive Director, "It has been nearly forty years since the passage of the Fair Housing Act, which explicitly forbids a housing provider, whether or not they're in the business of selling homes, from making racially discriminatory statements and decisions when advertising. No one should ever be told that they're not welcome in a home or a neighborhood because of their race."

Anyone with any information concerning a discriminatory housing practice can call the Fair Housing Action Center at 596-2100.