



Fullerton Observer

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LEFT TO RIGHT FRONT ROW: OC Human Relations Commission Vice Chair Rabbi Rick Steinberg, OCHRC Deputy Director Alison Edwards, OCHRC Commissioners Bekele Demissie and Joyce Sanchez, Rusty Kennedy and his wife Anita Varela, OC Human Relations Boardmember Susan Reese, OC Board of Supervisors Chair Lisa Bartlett, and OC Board Supervisor Michelle Steel.
RIGHT TO LEFT BACK ROW: OCHR Commissioner Edgar Medina, OCHR Boardmember James McQueen, OCHR Commissioner Ken Inouye, OCHR Commission Chair Becky Esparza, OCHR Boardmember Lin Fujitsubo, OCHR Commissioner Bill Wood, and OC Supervisor Todd Spitzer.

OC Human Relations Director Rusty Kennedy Honored

The Orange County Board of Supervisors recognized Rusty Kennedy for his years of service to the OC Human Relations Commission on Tuesday, October 11. Board Chair Supervisor Lisa Bartlett presented Rusty with a resolution commending him on his retirement and 40 years of service as the OC Human Relations Commission Director. Supervisor Todd Spitzer spoke about the importance of the Commission.

The resolution read in part: "As a courageous and visionary leader, Rusty Kennedy

has long demonstrated a sincere concern for the well-being of all people in our community, and is a highly respected and sought-after leader in human relations issues throughout Orange County, as well as the State of California. [He] has dedicated his life to addressing serious social issues with an innovative, win-win approach that has made OC Human Relations an award-winning and invaluable resource to the County of Orange and a model organization valued across the State."

Kennedy accepted the honor "on behalf

of the terrific people at the Commission and OC Human Relations whose work makes Orange County a better place for all people. The Board of Supervisors in creating the OC Human Relations Commission in 1971 set a standard in our community that all people deserve to be treated with respect, regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, gender or other arbitrary aspect of their being," said Kennedy.

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OC HUMAN RELATIONS' RUSTY KENNEDY HONORED AT BOARD MEETING continued from frontpage

"The OC Board of Supervisors affirms this wholly American notion that all people have a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness even when we have fundamental differences. We do not persecute those who are different, we do not imprison those who oppose our policies, we do not allow discrimination against anyone," he said.

Kennedy said "it was at the suggestion of the Board of Supervisors, 25 years ago that some amazing folks from business, industry, education, religion, and diverse communities came together to create the non-profit OC Human Relations, a public/private partnership." The non-profit works with the Commission to raise funds to expand programs and provide for needed personnel without asking for additional tax dollars from the County. "The organization has raised over 40 million dollars since then, to support this Board of Supervisor's



defined mission, in collaboration with the official Orange County Human Relations Commission," said Kennedy.

"Some of those amazing folks who go out everyday into diverse communities to bring people together, make peace, teach tolerance and respect, protecting the rights of all are here today with me," said Kennedy who asked the OC Human Relations nonprofit

members and Commissioners to join him. (See photo on frontpage.) Kennedy said he was touched and humbled by the recognition from the OC Board of Supervisors.

Thirty elected members of the OC Board of Supervisors and 11 county executives have supported the work of the Commission over the past 40 years.

To learn more about the work of the OC Human Relations and the Commission visit www.ochumanrelations.org.

Rusty Kennedy is also one of the original founding members of the Fullerton Observer Community Newspaper.