

AAAC continues progress

The Affirmative Action Advisory Committee, chaired by Affirmative Action Officer Rick Gomez, is seeking to open doors of communication for all employees.

In March, committee members attended a class, led by Gwen Sibley, concerning sexual harassment issues in the workplace. The class was inspired by a concern expressed in the employee survey conducted at the Health Fair last fall.

Another issue being studied, at the request of CEO Stephen Rhoades and survey responses, is the minority points system used in awarding promotions. Team members Mario Calderon, Frank Dellaripa and Dominick Marquez, assisted by special adviser Tish Speicher Werbner, are researching the system and information will be posted on the AAAC web site.

The web has added "Frequently Asked Questions" from employees, dealing with sexual harassment, employment discrimination and affirmative action. If you would like to see additional questions and answers posted, contact any committee member.

The District Board of Commissioners has selected an Affirmative Action Subcommittee chaired by Commissioner D. Anwar Al-Ghani. Commissioner Al-Ghani has attended two AAAC meetings to observe and advise.

In commemoration of the District's 75th anniversary, the AAAC will present two pictures to the District Board for display in the board room: *Do Unto Others* by Norman Rockwell and *Mentors* by Dane Tilghman.

Retirees, employees, family and friends attending the Employees Outing received bookmarks with the theme: "AAAC - Benchmark for New Beginnings." Picture That, a minority firm, designed the bookmarks listing the AAAC's accomplishments, and including the committee's mission statement.

Phase 3 of study circles on race relations was held May 26 to June 24. Phase 4 is being planned for September. Employees who are interested in participating in September study circles or at a later date may contact Rick Gomez or Steven Paul.

Following are the reflections of some committee members whose two-year terms have expired.

Rick Gomez, Chair: "One person cannot create a work environment of dignity and respect alone. I have participated with MDC employees in the study circles program who are dedicated to making a difference, at work and in the community."

Frank Dellaripa: "Serving on the AAAC has been personally rewarding for me because you become so open minded about other people's ideas and thoughts. That is diversity in a true sense of the word. When you capture these ideas and thoughts and try to implement them in our MDC culture then the organization as a whole is enriched."

Dominick Marquez: "It has been a rewarding experience and privilege to participate with a committee that has contributed in improving diversity relations at the District. Especially introducing and participating in the pilot study circles on race relations facilitated by NCCJ."

Linda Foster: "I was given a chance to make a difference and I hope that I did. I take with me fond memories and much respect for my co-workers. Thank you for a great experience!"

Trevor L. Roberts: "My experience with the AAAC has been very enriching. I have come to understand, how in today's world people need to be able to work together; focusing on similarities and common bonds; ties that bind us together.

Ethel L. Wright: "I am honored to be a member of this committee and to serve my fellow co-workers. I received great pleasure in working as team in getting some employees' issues resolved. It is my hope that future AAAC members work very diligently for the people at the MDC. "