



**Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS® and City Leaders Recognize
50th Anniversary of Fair Housing Act**
*REALTORS Announce First-time Homebuyer Initiative to Address
Decrease in Owner-occupied Homes*

Milwaukee (April 11, 2018) – The [Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS](#) is hosting a news conference on April 11 to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act and honor the men and women who were part of Milwaukee’s open housing marches that spanned 1967 to 1968.

“We want to thank the members of the NAACP Youth Council, the Commandos and all of the participants in the open housing marches 50 years ago. Their efforts improved the lives of thousands of people in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the United States,” says Vickie Kelsall, chairwoman of the board of directors of the Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS (GMAR). “The principles they marched for were important 50 years ago and are just as important today. And, they will be more important tomorrow, as future generations pursue the American dream of homeownership.”

As part of the news conference, the GMAR is presenting a check for \$12,500 to [Housing Resources, Inc.](#) to support their work in preparing Milwaukeeans for successful homeownership. Shorewest Realtors, RE/MAX Realty 100, the First Weber Foundation and Century 21 Affiliated each contributed funds to make the donation possible.

The GMAR is also launching a first-time homebuyer awareness and education initiative. During May and June, the association will execute a postcard mailing to thousands of renters throughout the city to encourage them to consider homeownership and direct them to homebuying classes offered by Housing Resources, Inc. In addition, the GMAR plans to produce a rack card for placement in city churches.

Statistics show Milwaukee has experienced a loss of owner-occupied homes in the last 10 years.

“Prior to the recession in 2007, 78% of single family homes, duplexes and condo units in the City of Milwaukee were owner-occupied. Currently, that figure is 68%, which represents a loss of roughly 13,000 owner-occupied homes,” says Kelsall, citing numbers from the City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development. “We want to reverse that trend. That’s why we’re focusing our efforts on encouraging and preparing more first-time homebuyers to enter the market.”

The April 11 news conference participants include: City of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett; Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, President of the Milwaukee Common Council; Margaret "Peggy" Rozga, Milwaukee NAACP Youth Council Member, and Fred Reed, Former NAACP Youth Council Commando; Dr. Eve Hall, President and CEO of the Milwaukee Urban League; William Tisdale, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council; Vickie Kelsall, Chairwoman of the GMAR Board of Directors; and Mike Ruzicka, President of the GMAR.

The Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS® is a 4,000-member strong professional organization dedicated to providing information, services and products to “help REALTORS help their clients” buy and sell real estate.

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