



# January 2026 Newsletter

*The mission of the Metro Human Relations Commission is to protect and promote the personal dignity, peace, safety, security, and general welfare of all people in Nashville and Davidson County through education, training, advocacy, and compliance services.*

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As we enter 2026 and the season of resolutions, we invite you to consider our mission: *"to protect and promote the personal dignity, peace, safety, security, and general welfare of all individuals in Nashville and Davidson County."* One step you can take to further this goal is to host a "No Hate On My Plate" dinner. The goal of this initiative is to bring community members together and create a safe space to discuss experiences and observations that reveal that we have more in common than we think.

The conversations at these dinners are led by trained facilitators who guide participants through a series of questions designed to challenge assumptions and narratives that seek to divide our community.

The host or hosts can be a group of individuals or an organized group such as a congregation, sports team, HOA, walking group, or neighbors. MHRC staff will work with you to coordinate the logistics and all details.

[Complete this form if you are interested in hosting No Hate On My Plate](#)

As you plan your year and commitments, consider taking a step toward building a more just, more united Nashville.

Much peace,

Davie Tucker Jr., Executive Director

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## **Nonprofit Focus: Southern Word Inc.**

Executive Director: Benjamin Smith [www.southernword.org](http://www.southernword.org)

Founded in 2008 by educators, youth development professionals, writers, and poets. Southern Word Inc. has been a leader in youth development in Tennessee, reaching more than 6,500 youth across 40 schools in 8 counties.

Their mission is, "Through the literary and performing arts, Southern Word offers creative solutions for youth to build literacy and presentation skills, reconnect to their education and lives, and act as leaders in the improvement of their communities. We are committed to providing youth, especially in underserved communities, with as many opportunities as possible to develop and publicly present their voices both live and in print, video, audio, and digital media."

Their programs include: spoken-word residencies and after-school workshops; music production and songwriting programs; writers in the schools; college program; Write with Pride; and Youth Poet Laureate. Violet Rae Hansen, who was Nashville's 2025 Youth Poet Laureate, closed out MHRC's 2nd Annual Friendsgiving and received a standing ovation. You can book the Poet Laureates through Southern Word's website.

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## Commissioner Spotlight: Wm. Alan Slone



Wm. Alan Slone (he/him/his) joined the Metro Human Relations Commission in July of 2025 by appointment of Mayor Freddie O'Connell. Mr. Slone is a practicing attorney, entrepreneur, and author based in Nashville, TN. Mr. Slone comes to the MHRC with a broad range of experience, from founding a criminal defense and family law firm fresh out of law school, to running estimation & compliance at a construction services firm, to founding [SmartRabbit Consulting](#), a legal consulting firm serving small and medium-sized businesses in Nashville.

He also serves as the founder and Chairman of the Board for [MIX Nashville](#), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to promoting and advocating on behalf of the Middle Tennessee non-monogamy community. He lives in the Whites Creek area (District 3) with his family and enjoys attending music performances and tinkering with computers in his spare time.

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## Upcoming events:

These are events across our city and county. Please visit their respective website for additional details, including cost and registration.

- Martin Luther King Jr. Celebrations across Nashville:
  - Thursday, 01/15/2026 6:30 pm [MLK Day Gala](#), Hutton Hotel
  - Saturday, 01/17/2026, 9:00 am, [Youth Symposium](#) at MLK Jr. Magnet School
  - Monday 01/19/2026,
    - 8:00 am [Youth Rally](#) at Jefferson Street Missionary Baptist Church
    - 9:00 am [March Down Historic Jefferson Street](#), Jefferson Street Missionary Baptist Church

- 10:00 am, [Annual Convocation](#), Tennessee State University, Gentry Center
- [Nashville Flea Market](#), January 23- 25,
- Ramadan, February 18 through April 2
- Ash Wednesday and Lent February 18,
- [Chinese New Year Celebration](#) on Saturday, February 21,

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**The Metro Human Relations Commission monthly meetings take place on the first Monday of every month.**

**Next Commission meeting: 4 pm Monday, February 2, 2026 at Lentz Public Health Center**

Information on meeting dates, locations, and livestream can all be found on our [Human Relations Commission Meeting Info webpage](#).

As always, our meetings are open to the public. You can submit a public comment either in person or [online](#).



The Metro Human Relations Commission is located at 150 2nd Avenue N. Suite 217, Nashville TN 37201

Contact us at: 615-880-3370, [MHRC@Nashville.gov](mailto:MHRC@Nashville.gov) or [www.nashville.gov/departments/human-relations](http://www.nashville.gov/departments/human-relations)

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