

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
HUMAN RIGHTS HALL OF FAME  
2010 INDUCTEES**

**Esther Ridpath Delaplaine**

A lifelong champion of human rights, at Swarthmore College Esther R. Delaplaine supported a campaign that persuaded its Board of Managers to abandon their "White Only" admission policy. After settling in a Montgomery County neighborhood near Glen Echo Amusement Park, she joined parents who protested the park's "White Only" directive, denying their own children access to the park, Mrs. Delaplaine and her children picketed. She also coordinated participation to ensure enough picketers and arranged food and drink to sustain them as they endured heckling by Brown Shirted Nazis and other segregationists for three months. Esther Delaplaine helped press for adoption of a Public Accommodations Law to eliminate segregation at places serving the public. In 1962 the Montgomery County Council passed the legislation and provided for a Human Relations Commission to enforce the law.

**Warren Fleming**

Warren Fleming is a community activist long dedicated to improving the lives of all people, especially in the often underserved up-county areas. Aware of many up-county residents unable to help themselves either due to a lack of awareness of their rights or because of long-held fears of speaking up, he formed the Damascus Connection Committee. This community-based organization provides assistance to the disenfranchised, the elderly, disabled, home bound and those without finances or knowledge of resources to help themselves or solve problems. Whatever the background of a community member asking for help, he has done his best to resolve issues, including housing, health care, recreation, senior care and training. Mr. Fleming exemplifies someone who walks the walk of Human Rights.

**Dr Suresh K. Gupta, Md.**

Sr. Suresh K. Gupta has practiced medicine in Montgomery County for over 25 years, serving patients with or without insurance of funds. Dr. Gupta is also the regional director of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin. His compassionate medical care, especially of his senior patients, finds him day and night in the homeless shelters, in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, even making house calls. He is the Governor's representative to the Maryland Board of Physicians with a mission to ensure that the residents of Montgomery County receive the highest quality of medical care. On the County's Human Rights Commission he is a strong protector of civil rights. An inspiring advocate for individuals or a community with unmet needs, his commitment to our residents has shown itself on several County boards. Dr. Gupta believes that we are all shareholders in our communities and must find a way to give back something positive.

### **Henry Hailstock**

Henry Hailstock's commitment to civil rights and diversity in the workplace resulted in an increase of business opportunity for minority business, the increase of minority representation in employment, increase in promotional opportunity for minorities and diversity policies in the workplace. His passion to engage in civil rights work is a life mission, with challenges. He has, in both an individual capacity and in many of his leadership roles in organizations, put him in an adversarial position with the top management and top political offices. He has many successes in defending those rights and at the same time, building bridges and establishing long term and productive relationships with those with whom he has held accountable. His efforts in the arenas of health care, small minority business, education, community relations, employment and housing have impacted so many in different ways that lives have been forever changed.

### **Monsignor Ralph Kuehner**

For several decades Monsignor Ralph Kuehner has demonstrated exemplary leadership in passionate advocacy for fair housing and social justice. He helped establish the Fair Housing Council of Greater Washington to inform residents about and counteract increasing housing discrimination throughout the entire region that includes Montgomery County. He continues to serve on this board, now merged into the Equal Rights Center. Monsignor Kuehner also collaboratively developed affordable assisted living opportunities for hundreds of senior citizens by funding Victory Housing, Inc., identifying surplus parish donors and governments. He compassionately brought people together to create "Metro Pointe" at the Wheaton subway, housing for young persons with paralytic spinal injuries and their caretakers.

### **Betty Valdes**

Betty Valdes is dedicated to helping others have better lives, especially populations that have been traditionally underserved, including ethnic groups, the home-bound, elderly and the incarcerated. A mentor and inspiration to young Latinos, particularly women, she has volunteered many hours helping immigrants achieve the dream of US citizenship. As producer and host of Que Pasa, a bilingual radio and cable TV show that have aired for 21 years on major Spanish radio stations and Montgomery County Channel 16, she educated the community about local laws and programs. She has served as President of the D.C. Chapter of Reforma, the national organization that directs library and information services to Latino and Spanish-speaking populations. A humanitarian volunteer and community advocate, she "just wants to give people the opportunity to succeed in life." Ms. Valdes has twice been named among Maryland's Top 100 Women.