

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monroe Woman Resolves Fair Housing Claim

The Civil Rights Litigation Initiative, a new legal clinic at the University of Michigan Law School, has won a victory for Monroe, Michigan resident Sheila Ashley in a disability discrimination case. Ms. Ashley accepted \$5,000 from a Monroe area Real Estate broker, Edward Pipis, to resolve her fair housing complaint. "I am very, very pleased with the way this turned out," said Ms. Ashley.

Ms. Ashley contacted the Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid Michigan in 2018 after she was denied the right to install a ramp at the entrance of an apartment in Monroe. Ms. Ashley has a disability and uses a wheelchair.

Testing by the Fair Housing Center supported Ms. Ashley's claim that Edward Pipis refused to rent to her because she wished to install a ramp in order to gain access to the apartment.

The case was resolved by law students Will McCartney, Claire Shimberg and Natalie Treacy, working under the supervision of Professor Michael J. Steinberg, Director of the Civil Rights Litigation Initiative of the University of Michigan Law School. Ms. Ashley called Professor Steinberg and the law students, "heaven sent," and said they "helped her through so much."

The Civil Rights Litigation Initiative just filed another Fair Housing Center-referred case last week. Testing by the Fair Housing Center supported the claim of discrimination based on familial status and sex.



Sheila Ashley. Picture taken by Pamela Kisch

The Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid Michigan, founded in 1992, actively protects the civil rights of those who are discriminated against in the rental, sale, or financing of housing through investigation, education, advocacy, and legal action. The FHC takes an average of 180 complaints each year from its eight-county service area – Ingham, Clinton, Eaton, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe, and Washtenaw counties.

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