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Yankwitt LLP Wins Pro Bono Case on behalf of Westchester Residential Opportunities

WHITE PLAINS, NY (January 18, 2022) – Yankwitt LLP prevailed in a pro bono case before the Fair Housing Board of the [Westchester Human Rights Commission](#) (the Commission) on behalf of Westchester Residential Opportunities (WRO), a nonprofit that has served Westchester County for more than five decades. WRO retained Yankwitt LLP after it developed investigatory evidence showing that real estate broker Keith Foster and his firm K&L Luxury Realty engaged in discriminatory practices.

WROs' trained "testers" called Foster on three occasions to inquire about three separate listings. In each case, the tester indicated that she had a housing voucher that would pay the rent – in two cases, a Section 8 Housing voucher and in one case a Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS voucher. Foster told the WRO testers that the landlord does not rent to anyone with vouchers, which violates Westchester County Fair Housing Law, as brokers and landlords are not allowed to discriminate based on the source of income used to rent an apartment.

During a hearing before the Commission, a representative from WRO testified and offered audio recordings of Foster engaging in discriminatory practices into evidence. Defendants failed to show up for the hearing. In December, the Commission decided in favor of WRO, finding that Foster violated the Fair Housing Law and the Commission's Rules and Regulations and awarding WRO about \$60,000 in compensatory damages, punitive damages and attorneys' fees. Additionally, Foster and K&L Luxury Realty were fined \$10,000 for their violations.

"We are thrilled with the Commission's decision and are grateful for Yankwitt LLP's willingness to represent WRO pro bono," said Marlene Zarfes, executive director of WRO. "Discriminatory housing practices cannot be tolerated, and we hope this decision discourages others from violating the law. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of Yankwitt LLP attorney [Michael Reed](#), who represented us zealously throughout the entire process."

About Westchester Residential Opportunities

Founded in 1968, Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3), nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote equal, affordable and accessible housing opportunities for all residents in the Lower Hudson Valley of New York. WRO's programs (most of which are free) include promoting equal access to housing (eliminating housing discrimination and helping enforce fair housing and fair lending laws); eviction, mortgage default and utility shut-off prevention and counseling by HUD-certified housing counselors; first-time home buying counseling; and independent living for individuals living with mental illness. For more information, visit us at www.wroinc.org or call 914-428-4507. WRO's work on this matter was supported by

funding under a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

About Yankwitt LLP

Founded in 2009, [Yankwitt LLP](#) is Westchester County's go-to law firm for high-stakes and bet-the-company litigation. With one of the most experienced litigation teams in the county, Yankwitt LLP represents businesses and high-net-worth individuals across a broad range of matters. The firm also routinely handles complex cases in Westchester on behalf of national law firms and often serves as trial counsel for local law firms.