

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

March 20, 2024
2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Video-Conference

MINUTES

Attendees: Judge Sanchez-Figueroa (Chair), Troy Brown, Lia Cestaro, PJ Deak, Esther Harris, Brian Hill, Meghan Korn, Daisy Rosado-Hack, Derik Rodriguez, Michael Snyder, Philip Strambler, Spiro Uyar, and Shawna Woodard

Absent: Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chairman Emeritus), Isabel Alvarez, and Delbert Martinez.

Judge Sanchez-Figueroa called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

The minutes from the January 17, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

Welcome

Judge Sanchez-Figueroa welcomed our newest member, Derik Rodriguez. Derik, a Lead Support Enforcement Officer, was recommended by his director, Paul Bourdoulous. Derik will succeed Delbert Martinez who plans to step down from the ACCC.

ACCC Membership Subcommittee

The subcommittee was asked to develop a process and parameters for membership on the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency. The subcommittee members are Daisy Rosado, PJ Deak, Troy Brown, Meghan Korn, and Judge Sanchez-Figueroa. Troy Brown reported that the subcommittee has met on several occasions and to discuss recruitment and term limits.

For recruitment, they are focused on how new members will be added to the committee; divisional representation; possibility of allowing members outside of the Judicial Branch; membership requirements – skillset and active participation.

Under the category of term limits, the committee discussed how long a member should serve on the committee; the number of terms a member can serve; exit interviews to understand the individual's experience while serving; and a process for replacing a vacated seat.

The subcommittee also discussed the benefits of having an ACCC co-chair.

The subcommittee meets every three weeks. They expect to have a set of recommendations ready for the next ACCC meeting in May.

Updates from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Troy Brown believes the DEI Unit should be very responsive to the ACCC. He is committed to providing us a comprehensive update at each meeting.
- The National Center for State Courts will host a racial justice education workshop in April 2024 in Phoenix, Arizona. The purpose is to bring together judges and court professionals responsible for DEI and/or education to learn from each other. Judge Sanchez-Figueroa and Troy will represent the Branch.

- Chief Justice Robinson met a University of New Haven professor, Dr. Schroeder, who teaches the course, [The UNCommon Course](#). The class is touted as an innovative course that enables individuals to gain a new perspective on justice, bias, and equity. Dr. Schroeder is interested in facilitating the course to a group of Judicial Branch employees to vet. It would be a full day at a location to be determined. Troy will come up with some tentative dates starting in June. Contact Troy if interested in participating.
- Lia Cestaro reported that, in just a few months of 2024, the DEI Unit has already held several cultural competency courses, including FCR 100. They piloted a new LGBTQI course that went very well. They recognized that attendance, overall, has been very good. They are noticing a wider variety of employees from different divisions that are registering and attending.
- Recognition events were held for Black History Month.
- Several events are scheduled for Women's History Month, including one that will feature Chief Court Administrator Judge Bozzuto, Superior Court Operations Division Executive Director Tais Ericson, and United States Attorney Vanessa Avery.
- Members of the ACCC requested that the DEI Unit send announcements timelier. Recent announcements were sent very close to the event date and people could not attend. Brian Hill and Lia responded that they are working on that. Lia said they are Asian Pacific Islander and LGBTQI month events are being planned and
- Troy and Lia have compiled a short list of possible Diversity Week keynote speakers. If we may agree on a keynote speaker to pursue, DEI can begin making contact and hopefully announce Diversity Week 2024 soon. Lia listed the names and gave a brief description of each person. She will follow-up with an e-mail to all members to respond with their feedback. Judge Sanchez-Figueroa requested that Diversity Week be added to the next agenda.
- Troy reported that Judge Bozzuto reviewed and approved a list of courses that will be offered to judges.
- An RFP was issued to solicit culturally responsive co-facilitators to assist with FCR 100 and other courses. They anticipate awarding the contract by next fiscal year. This will allow them to offer more classes.
- The inclusive language quick card has been approved by Chief Justice Robinson and Judge Bozzuto. The DEI Unit will distribute the quick card in June for Pride Month. This quick card is geared towards employees. Another quick card will be made available for judges.
- DEI is working on a public-facing web page. It is expected to be completed in 2024.
- Brian and Troy are working with Human Resource Management to gather demographic information about employees.

New Business

None

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency will be May 15, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. via Video-Conference.

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.