

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

May 17, 2023
2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Video-Conference

MINUTES

Attendees: Judge Sanchez-Figueroa (Chair); Isabel Alvarez, Troy Brown, Samuel Bruder, Lia Cestaro, Patrick (PJ) Deak, Esther Harris, Brian Hill, Meghan Korn, Delbert Martinez, Daisy Ortiz, Michael Snyder, Philip Strambler, Spiro Uyar, and Shawna Woodard

Absent: Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chairman Emeritus) and Ewa Wojewodzki

Shawna Woodard called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

The minutes from the March 28, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved.

Diversity Week 2023

Troy Brown reported the subcommittee members included himself, Judge Sanchez-Figueroa, Isabel, Esther, Mike, Sam, and Lia. The theme for this year's Diversity Week will be "Closing the Gap: The Path Towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion". Sam wrote the description for the theme, and the subcommittee will finalize that language by the end of next week. Chief Justice Robinson will deliver the keynote address for this year's opening ceremony as it is the 10th anniversary of Diversity Week and the Judicial Branch DEI Unit has been created. It has been confirmed that the Opening Ceremony will be held at the LOB on Monday October 23, 2023, and the session will be hybrid (in-person and virtual). All other workshops throughout the week will either be in-person or virtual, but not hybrid. Approximately 3-4 workshops will be experiential such as visiting a mosque or synagogue, visiting one of CT's tribes (Mashantucket Pequot), and a historical tour of Hartford's housing history. Discussion occurred about availability of funds, and Brian Hill confirmed that he is open to allocating a reasonable amount of funds for the week.

Future Projects/Activities Status/Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Updates

Gender Identity Proposal Update: Judge Sanchez-Figueroa and Troy Brown will meet to determine next steps to move the proposal forward. An update will be provided by e-mail or during the next meeting.

Focus Groups: Troy proposed to hold the focus group for one hour during our next meeting in July. Judge Sanchez-Figueroa agreed and the Committee voted unanimously in favor. The last Focus Group that was held in 2012; Troy would like the input of Committee members to determine what areas the DEI Unit should focus their efforts.

Foundations in Cultural Responsiveness (FCR) 100: As FCR 100 is the Judicial Branch's flagship training, it was recommended that the session become mandatory for all Branch employees. Any members of the Committee that have not yet attended a session should do so as soon as possible to assist in increasing the visibility of its importance. Troy Brown and LaTira Nesmith facilitated a session in April; PJ Deak attended that session and provided his feedback. Lia Cestaro and Isabel Alvarez are currently facilitating a session this month. There are 2 sessions scheduled for the month of June, and Troy and Lia will work to continue scheduling at least one session every month. Both Troy and Isabel have availability to train multiple sessions each year.

New Business

None reported

Announcements

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency will be in-person on July 19, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. in the Jury Room at the Middletown Superior Court located at 1 Court Street, Middletown, CT. A potluck lunch will be provided by Committee members.

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.