

# CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

---

May 28, 2019  
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
225 Spring Street, Room 4B, Wethersfield

### MINUTES

**Attendees:** Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chair), Troy Brown, Samuel Bruder, Sandra Cardone, Linda J. Cimino, Patrick (PJ) Deak, Juanita Halepas, Esther Harris, Zarin Kapur, Meghan Korn, Ines Nieves, Daisy Ortiz, Michaelangelo Palmieri, Felix Rodriguez, Spiro Uyar, Ewa Wojewodzki, and Shawna Woodard

**Absent:** Isabel Alvarez, Brittany Kaplan/Alison Chandler, Cristina Johnson, and Philip Strambler

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

The minutes of the January 22, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

### Diversity Week 2019

The Chief Justice named Sam Bruder and Isabel Alvarez co-chairs of Diversity Week 2019. Sam gave a brief update on their initial plans for this year's event mostly keeping with the structure of Diversity Week. They will consider adding new artwork that represents this year's theme: Melting Pot to Mosaic. The artwork, a mosaic of Judicial Branch employee faces, would complement the current Diversity Week image, not replace it. A recommendation was made concerning the mosaic. It should make a picture or spell out the word "melting pot." Also, given the theme, a recommendation was made to invite back the individual who once presented the Brown Mosaic workshop during Diversity Week. Regarding the keynote speaker, the co-chairs contacted Adam Foss's scheduler to confirm his availability.

### Train the Trainer for ACCC Members

Troy Brown will send a formal invitation to the ACCC members who expressed an interest in participating in the program. There are three tracks for this program. The traditional train the trainer program spans 4 ½ days and is a requirement for those who want to learn or enhance their skills in delivering a training program. If the participants wishes to facilitate *Foundations in Cultural Responsiveness (FCR) 100*, they must attend an additional 2 days of training, plus 2-3 hours of facilitation meetings, for specific instruction in the FCR 100 curriculum. Current FCR 100 facilitators who want a refresher may opt to participate solely in 2-day FCR 100 Train the Trainer course. The dates for each course are set and all coursework will be complete by November 2019 – just in time for the 2020 calendar year when we expect that the FCR 100 course will be in high demand. The Human Capital Training Subcommittee plans to recommend that FCR 100 be mandatory for all Judicial Branch employees. Spiro Uyar and Sam Bruder expressed their interest in participating in the full program to become FCR 100 facilitators. Other members expressed an interest but could not attend all days of training due to vacation or work schedules.

### Subcommittee Reports

**Gender Fluidity and Judicial Branch Policy 618:** Brian Hill, Director of Human Resources Management, forwarded the ACCC's two draft proposals to the Human Capital Employee Well-Being Subcommittee for review. Some issues about the dress code were recorded in the human capital employee focus groups and those matters were assigned to the Well-Being Subcommittee to address. Upon review of the ACCC proposals, the Well-Being Subcommittee sent one draft proposal back to Brian Hill. ACCC members requested to review this draft. Sam Bruder reported that the new draft emphasizes professional attire for the settings (i.e., courtroom, office, etc.) and not for the gender.

Esther Harris will send the ACCC a copy of the revised draft and she will contact Human Resources Management to determine its status.

Troy Brown read an e-mail sent to the CSSD Multicultural Affairs Unit by an employee who said they were born female but identify as non-binary. The employee shared their experience attempting to adhere to the current Judicial Branch dress code, which they find to be limiting. The employee says they fear discrimination for how they may identify and express their identity through clothing, and that they may be subject to discipline for not following the dress code by staying in one of the two categories (i.e., acceptable dress for men or women). The Chief Justice recommended that we bring this e-mail to Judge Carroll's attention.

**Action and Reflection:** The Holiday Potluck and Ethnography session, originally planned for December 2018, was held on February 26, 2019. The Subcommittee cancelled the April 2019 session as they hoped to find other ACCC members to present their ethnographies. More than likely, the June 2019 session will be cancelled as the Subcommittee must regroup to plan upcoming activities.

**FCR 100 Curriculum Revisions with SJI Educational Video:** Troy Brown reported that he has not reviewed the curriculum yet to include the SJI Educational Video. Earlier in the meeting he reported we are actively recruiting new FCR 100 facilitators and they will begin their training soon. The ACCC members agreed that, due to the timing, these new facilitators must be trained using the current curriculum. FCR 100 revisions to add the SJI educational video will be revisited the end of the year or early 2020. This will allow all facilitators to be a part of the curriculum process. They will also refer to course evaluations. Zarin Kapur added that she recently facilitated an FCR 100 class for Support Enforcement Services employees. She spoke highly of the curriculum as it is now and agrees that the addition of the SJI educational video will make it even better.

**SJI Community Outreach Video:** Shawna Woodard reported that this project is complete. The grant administrator sent the final grant report to the State Justice Institute (SJI) the final report closing our grant. The educational video will be added to the FCR 100 curriculum. The marketing video subtitles were translated to Polish, Spanish and Portuguese. The video is on the Branch's YouTube page and it is currently a feature on the rotating banner at [www.jud.ct.gov](http://www.jud.ct.gov). The Chief Justice added that other statute judiciaries often praise us on all we do with limited monetary resources.

## New Business

- A discussion ensued about the human capital initiative that encourages employees to add a photo on their Microsoft Outlook e-mails profiles. While ACCC members understood its purpose – connecting employees by putting a face to the name – employees should be aware it may expose claims or feelings of implicit or explicit bias surrounding age, gender, ethnicity or race. Members noted that the Branch removed the college graduation date from the job applications to prevent age discrimination. People also mentioned that they may think twice before listing organizations that associate them with a religion or racial/ethnic group for fear of discrimination in hiring practices. The ACCC acknowledged that the initiative is voluntary.
- Ideas were presented for new activities to be taken on by the ACCC.
  - To market and increase participation in ACCC programs and events: This effort creates groups of employees within each judicial districts who would represent the ACCC by promoting our programs and events to their colleagues. These employees may also host Lunch & Learns. Shawna Woodard shared the challenges that were presented with the District Liaison Program. It required a great deal of oversight. The ACCC members agreed that the Committee is unable to take on that responsibility at this time.
  - To show we care about the communities in which we work and live in: This effort creates another annual event that is smaller than Diversity Week in which we organize a community service-oriented project. It was noted that the Branch does not provide volunteer hours to employees. The activity must have a learning component attached to it to qualify for E-

Education time. Otherwise, employees must use their personal time to participate. There were also concerns about how we pick organizations or needs to support to be sure none are excluded or over-utilized. Additionally, we understood that volunteer hours were discussed within a human capital subcommittee. Esther Harris noted that per Connecticut statute, the Judicial Branch can only volunteer for two organizations.

- To publish a user-friendly glossary of cultural competency and diversity terms: Juanita distributed an example from California. The Chief Justice thought it would be a good idea, however, it would require continuous updating as vernacular and terms change very fast. Also, we may not know what is universally right or wrong. The ACCC will consider this for a future agenda.

## **Announcements and Upcoming Events**

From Troy Brown:

- Implicit Bias training will occur over three days in June by the McArthur Grant representatives. The training includes how to facilitate a community dialog. Judicial was given a few seats in the training. Michael Palmieri, Zarin Kapur, Meghan Korn and Daisy Ortiz will attend. Contact Troy if interested.
- Meghan Korn and Troy are co-facilitating a training: "Unfiltered Conversation on Race." They recently delivered their second class to members of the Connecticut Bar Association. Feedback for this training has been very positive. The ACCC should consider this as a topic for Diversity Week.

From Chief Justice Robinson:

- The ACCC should consider delivering a course or presentation on colorism. This will be discussed in more detail at a later date.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.