

# CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

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July 26, 2016  
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
225 Spring Street, Room 204  
Wethersfield

### MINUTES

Attendees: Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chair), Isabel Alvarez, Troy Brown, Alison Chandler, Juanita Halepas, Esther Harris, Cristina Johnson, Zarin Kapur, Daisy Ortiz, Philip Strambler, Ewa Wojewodzki, Shawna Woodard

Absent: Samuel Bruder, Karen Chorney, Linda J. Cimino, Precious Hyland, Ines Nieves

#### 1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on March 22, 2016 were unanimously approved with corrections.

#### 3. Diversity Week 2016 Status Update

Alison Chandler reported on the activities of the Diversity Week Planning Workgroup. The theme is “Knowing Ourselves and Respecting Others: Cornerstones to Achieving Our Common Goal.” Justice Robinson will deliver the keynote address at the Opening Celebration on Monday, October 24, 2016. The following speakers are confirmed or being confirmed where noted:

##### Breakout Session speakers:

Susan Campbell – Journalist – Homelessness  
Francisco Palmieri – Diplomatic Secretary – Communication  
Dr. Leslie Desmangles – Professor – Religion  
Kimball Robbins – JB Employee – Gender  
Marilyn Ford – Professor – Race  
(Tentative) Sean Connolly – Commissioner of Veterans Affairs – Veterans

##### Week Learning speakers:

Robin McHaelen – Sexual orientation  
Rabbi Donna Berman – Judaism  
Atty. Edwin Colon – Undocumented immigrants  
Swaranjit Singh Khalsa – Sikhism  
Daisy Ortiz – FCR 100

Troy Brown – Jamaican Culture

Isabel Alvarez and Meghan Korn – Understanding Latin Culture

Susan Campbell – Homelessness

She noted that Susan Campbell has committed to speaking about homelessness at the Opening Celebration and during the Week. Isabel Alvarez will follow-up with Robin McHaelen on behalf of Alison. Alison noted that the workgroup is pursuing additional speakers on the topic of self-care as our theme is about knowing oneself. The Workgroup anticipates sending a save the date to all Branch employees on August 1.

#### 4. Lunch & Learn

On behalf of Linda Cimino, Shawna Woodard distributed the draft flyer for the ACCC's first Lunch & Learn that was scheduled to be delivered in May of 2016 but was subsequently postponed. The topic was *Understanding Traumatic Stress and a Trauma-Informed Response*. The topic was selected because the event was going to be delivered in May which was Mental Health Awareness Month, and it was intended to provoke a discussion about traumatized individuals and how involvement with the Judicial Branch may affect them. It was also going to include common triggers, tips, and helpful techniques for court personnel. An outside presenter was identified and she agreed to facilitate this Lunch & Learn without remuneration. After a discussion, the Committee concurred that the topic was necessary, but wished to focus its perspective on a community or cultural group to make the topic more relevant to making a more culturally competent workforce. The Committee also settled on wanting to host the first Lunch & Learn in 2016. They were not so much concerned about the issue of scheduling a Lunch & Learn close to Diversity Week. Cristina Johnson will relay the feedback to Linda and Ines Nieves and will present to the ACCC a revised proposal.

A recommendation was made to begin planning for the next Lunch & Learn in 2017. The ACCC had previously agreed to present two Lunch & Learn sessions each year. A discussion ensued about the next topic. Several ideas were discussed that focused on race and conflicts fed by current events; fear of cultural differences; and understanding communication styles and how to have a conversation with someone about an uncomfortable subject without being aggressive, attacking or being on the defense. Justice Robinson, Troy Brown, Phil Strambler and Juanita Halepas volunteered to develop a proposal for this next Lunch & Learn topic.

Members also felt that the Committee should make a firm schedule of its two Lunch & Learn sessions, much like Diversity Week, so that other urgencies do not impede on their delivery.

#### 5. ACCC Mission and Vision Statements

In the interest of time, Justice Robinson tabled this agenda item to discuss at the next ACCC meeting.

#### 6. New Business

Daisy Ortiz announced that her family will receive the Borinqueneer Congressional Gold Medal on behalf of her grandfather, the late CPL Felix Rosado Melendez. The 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment,

nicknamed “The Borinqueneers,” was a Puerto Rican regiment of the United States Army who served in World War I, World War II and the Korean War. The event will take place this Saturday, July 30, 2016 at 11:00 AM at the front steps of the State Capitol facing Bushnell Park.

#### 7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m. The next meeting of the ACCC is September 27, 2016 at 2 p.m.