

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

November 19th, 2025
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Video Conference

MINUTES

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

Absent: Isabel Alvarez

Judge Sanchez-Figueroa called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

The meeting minutes from September 17th, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

ACCC Membership Subcommittee

Troy Brown provided an update on behalf of the subcommittee. The subcommittee reviewed – applications, and based on their evaluation, identified five (5) candidates – three (3) from Superior Court Operations (SCO) and two (2) from Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to recommend for consideration for ACCC membership.

Brian Hill moved to approve the five (5) recommended candidates as presented by the subcommittee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

An official approval notice will be sent from Troy Brown and Judge Sanchez-Figueroa to the selected candidates regarding next steps and January meeting expectations. The subcommittee will review onboarding requirements (ex. Completion of FCR-100) in their January meeting.

The committee discussed sending a notice from the chair to all current members requesting confirmation of their interest in continuing ACCC service. Troy Brown will draft the notice and send it to Judge Sanchez-Figueroa to send out to all members.

Diversity Week 2025

Lia Cestaro shared the Diversity Week Report and thanked everyone for their contribution and their support. She shared highlights from the 12th annual Diversity Week, including an overview of the theme, session offerings, and feedback received.

For the week workshops, the report highlighted all 14 workshops, detailed participant attendance, and session-by-session evaluations. Committee members discussed sharing this comprehensive report with the incoming Chief Court Administrator. Photos from Diversity Week are uploaded in the K drive.

New Business

Transgender Policy Subcommittee

Troy Brown recommended to reconvene the **Transgender Policy Subcommittee**, which previously contributed to the development of the language guide. The renewed subcommittee would focus on establishing guidance and potential policy related to supporting transgender individuals within the organization, including operational considerations with HR, FAQs, and best practices. No members were formally requested at this time, but the committee noted that new members could contribute, and it was recommended Lia Cestaro chair this subcommittee.

Solicitation of Members for the DEI Strategic Plan

Troy Brown also discussed upcoming solicitations for involvement in the DEI Strategic Plan. Over the past year, the DEI Unit has conducted focus groups, and once all feedback is consolidated, two to three committee members can work alongside DEI staff to draft the new strategic plan. Expression of interest will be gathered in January 2026, with a goal of completing a draft by late spring or early summer.

Solicitation of Members for the 2026 Diversity Week Planning Committee

Troy Brown is recruiting members of the committee to assist the DEI Unit with program development for 2026 Diversity Week and would like to identify two to three members at the next meeting on January 21st.

The committee reviewed tentative dates for Diversity Week 2026. The preferred dates of October 26th – October 30th do not conflict with any religious holidays; however, they may overlap with the Northeast Gathering of Court Administrators in Rhode Island, which could impact attendance by senior judicial leadership. These dates may also coincide with oral arguments, affecting availability of the Chief Court Administrator. An alternative option of October 5-9 was proposed for consideration.

Rules Committee

An update was provided on the Rules Committee in the Superior Court regarding the misgendering of nonbinary and transgender individuals in Connecticut courts, on which the DEI Unit had previously weighed in. The proposal has been temporarily placed on hold due to questions about courtroom implementation. A second, similar proposal to adopt formal rules for name and pronoun use for attorneys, parties, and witnesses has also been paused. The Rules Committee plans to continue discussion and may request additional input from the DEI Unit and potentially the Connecticut Bar Association.

Announcements

None

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency will be on January 21st, 2025, at CSSD, 455 Winding Brook Road, Glastonbury, CT Room 220 at 2:00 p.m. Please check in with security on the 4th floor and you will be escorted to the room.

The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

DRAFT