

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

November 27, 2018
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
225 Spring Street, Room 4B, Wethersfield

MINUTES

Attendees: Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chair), Isabel Alvarez, Samuel Bruder, Sandra Cardone, Alison Chandler, Linda J. Cimino, Patrick (PJ) Deak, Juanita Halepas, Zarin Kapur, Meghan Korn, Daisy Ortiz, Felix Rodriguez, Philip Strambler, Spiro Uyar, Ewa Wojewodzki, and Shawna Woodard

Absent: Troy Brown, Esther Harris, Cristina Johnson, Ines Nieves, and Michaelangelo Palmieri

Shawna Woodard called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

The minutes of the September 25, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved with corrections.

Diversity Week 2018

Samuel Bruder gave an update on Diversity Week 2018. At the Opening Day Celebration, there were 196 participants: 188 were employees, 4 were family support magistrates and the remaining were guests from other state agencies. For the week events, we had a total of 432 registrations in the various courses and presentations that were offered throughout the week. Through the service project, the Judicial Branch donated over 200 socks to veterans. Sam read some of the comments received in the Opening Day evaluations. Meghan Korn recommended that we keep the registration table open for the afternoon sessions to assist participants with questions and where to go. Shawna Woodard will talk to the Chief about naming a chairperson for Diversity Week 2019 and forming a subcommittee to begin searching for a keynote speaker.

Lunch and Learn Recap – Let's Chew On It! Office Culture and the Way We Talk to Each Other

Alison Chandler reported that the Lunch and Learn went well. Alison and Esther Harris have some ideas to enhance the curriculum for when they present it again. ACCC members had hoped there would have been more employees in attendance. A discussion ensued about ways to promote and market our activities. Those recommendations included sharing the e-mails that are sent to us about our ACCC member activities outside of the Branch; speaking to managers and supervisors to encourage participation by their staff; pursue mandatory training hours in cultural competency and diversity for new hires; and find ways to appeal to people who are not receptive to these topics and who say "I don't need this."

When the discussion turned to handling difficult participants and their comments/questions in class, a recommendation was presented to develop a train-the-trainer program for our members who want to present and facilitate courses. The Chief would like to speak to Troy Brown and other members who could train ACCC members to facilitate these courses.

Black History Month 2019

On behalf of Troy Brown, Shawna Woodard reported that Dr. Stephen L. Carter accepted our invitation to speak to Judicial Branch employees for Black History Month. Mr. Carter is waiting for dates from us to confirm. A subcommittee was formed to secure a location to accommodate at least 200 attendees and plan the program. Subcommittee volunteers: Juanita Halepas, Isabel Alvarez, and Samuel Bruder.

Mr. Carter is the bestselling author of several novels, including *"Invisible: The Forgotten Story of the Black Woman Lawyer Who Took Down America's Most Powerful Mobster."* He is also a former law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and is the William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law at Yale University.

Subcommittee Reports

Gender Fluidity and Judicial Branch Policy 618: Sam Bruder will contact Brian Hill to confirm how he would like to receive our recommendation.

Cultural/Religious Issues with ID Verification: Shawna Woodard and Sam Bruder will draft a procedure memo to be sent to the Branch via the Executive Directors or the Office of the Chief Court Administrator. The memo will cite our resource, Aida Mansoor from the Muslim Coalition of Connecticut, and her guidance on how to handle these situations.

Action and Reflection: The Loving Generation (Part 2): On October 30th, the Subcommittee showed the last two videos and facilitated a discussion. The Subcommittee plans to deliver a holiday potluck and ethnography discussion at our next meeting on December 18th. Isabel Alvarez and Zarin Kapur will contact the ACCC membership about food items.

ACCC Video Update

Alison Chandler reported that the promotional video is now on the Branch's YouTube page. Shawna Woodard submitted a request to the Judicial Branch Web Board to feature the promotional video on jud.ct.gov. Shawna will contact Dan from Middlesex Community College for assistance with the timestamps and translated subtitles. Chief Justice Robinson asked that we investigate inserting an inset with a sign language interpreter. Regarding the educational video, Troy Brown will incorporate the videos into the FCR 100 curriculum.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Chief Justice Robinson:

- He recently trained a group in West Virginia that was live-streamed and gave a presentation in San Diego to the Chief Judges of the Appellate Courts.
- Recommended a book "The Color of Law" as a good read.
- Was named to the Ebony Power 100 list

Isabel Alvarez:

- Reported that her unit is offering The Power of Diversity twice a month in two locations.

PJ Deak:

- Several events to be held at 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT"
 - "Quest: a Portrait of an American Family" movie screening on December 7, 2018
 - "Let's Try to Talk About Race" book discussion on December 9, 2018
 - "Martin's Mentors: Developing the Strategy of Non-Violence" on January 20, 2019
 - "All Me: The Life and Times of Winfred Rembert" movie screening on February 9, 2019

New Business

Chief Justice Robinson approved a review of the FCR 100 curriculum, which would include incorporating the educational video. Subcommittee members include Daisy Ortiz, Meghan Korn, and Troy Brown.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.