

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

September 17, 2025
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Video Conference

MINUTES

Attendees: Troy Brown, Lia Cestaro, Patrick (PJ) Deak, Brian Hill, Meghan Korn, Derik Rodriguez, Michael Snyder, Philip Strambler, Spiro Uyar, and Shawna Woodard

Absent: Judge Norma Sanchez-Figueroa (Chair), Isabel Alvarez, and Daisy Rosado-Hack

Troy Brown called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

The meeting minutes from the August 13th, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.

ACCC Membership Subcommittee

Troy Brown provided an update on behalf of the subcommittee. An email was sent on September 8th, 2025 soliciting applications from Judicial Branch employees to be considered for membership on the ACCC committee. Eighteen applications were received, the majority from Court Support Services Division. The subcommittee will reconvene on September 25th, 2025 to review the applications and determine recommendations for the full committee. One applicant, a Judicial Branch employee from Probate Administration, who does not have access to PowerApp, will need an alternative method for submission; the subcommittee will work on a solution in their next meeting.

ACCC Internal Website

Troy Brown reported that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) webpage is currently being converted to SharePoint. Once the conversion is complete, the link to the ACCC webpage will be posted on the DEI SharePoint site. The committee will be notified when the link is available.

Diversity Week 2025

Troy Brown reported that he is working with the keynote speaker, Justice Melissa Long of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, on her Opening Day Ceremony remarks. Opening Day Ceremony will have three options for breakout sessions this year, and an email will be sent to registered participants allowing them to rank their preferred sessions.

Lia Cestaro reported that the Legislative Office Building has been confirmed as the venue for the Opening Ceremony. Capacity for the large room is 240 people, with 165 employees registered and a waitlist of 50 – accommodations to the registration capacity has been made to allow for judges, magistrates, and special invitees. Six external participants, including members of the Connecticut Bar Association, are also expected to attend.

A notice has been sent to judges and magistrates inviting them to attend Diversity Week, and a few have already shown interest. More information on the week-long sessions will be released 9/19/2025 with 14 courses available for employees to participate in, and additional topics may be added later as collaboration continues. The committee is also arranging refreshments, including coffee, pre-packaged snacks, and cookies.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Troy Brown)

- Two focus groups scheduled for Friday, September 12th were canceled due to low registration. The DEI Unit has combined the morning and afternoon sessions to increase participation.
- The DEI Unit continues to conduct training; however, enrollment and attendance have been low. Some sessions have been canceled due to low enrollment, and there have also been instances where employees registered but did not attend. A minimum of ten participants is required for training to proceed.
- The DEI Unit recently facilitated the “Microaggressions, Stereotypes, and Bias” training to the Public Defender’s Office and is planning additional trainings for DDS.
- Upcoming Cultural Recognition Events include Hispanic Heritage Month with two Kahoot! trivia games scheduled to test staff knowledge of weekly facts highlighting significant Hispanic individuals. An email notice was also sent out to staff regarding the significance of Hispanic Heritage Month. Currently, 38 employees have registered for the Kahoot! on 9/26 and 25 for the one on 10/14.

New Business

None

Announcements

None

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency will be on November 19th, 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 2:35 p.m.