

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

September 27, 2016
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
225 Spring Street, Room 204
Wethersfield

MINUTES

Attendees: Isabel Alvarez, Troy Brown, Samuel Bruder, Alison Chandler, Karen Chorney, Linda J. Cimino, Juanita Halepas, Esther Harris, Cristina Johnson, Zarin Kapur, Ines Nieves, Daisy Ortiz, Philip Strambler, Ewa Wojewodzki, Shawna Woodard

Absent: Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chair), Precious Hyland

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. Justice Robinson sent his regrets for a matter at the Supreme Court and requested the meeting continue with Shawna Woodard presiding.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on July 26, 2016 were unanimously approved with corrections.

3. Lunch and Learn

Linda J. Cimino thanked the Committee for their feedback at the July meeting regarding the topic for the next Lunch and Learn. She has spoken with Attorney Michelle Duprey, Director of the City of New Haven Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities and a leading advocate for persons with disabilities, to serve as our guest speaker. A specific topic has not been discussed with Attorney Duprey, however, she is interested in presenting at the Judicial Branch. Many Committee members supported this as long as Attorney Duprey spoke from a cultural identity perspective to help employees to embrace this group. The Lunch and Learn is tentatively reserved for November 29, 2016 in Room 4B at 225 Spring Street in Wethersfield.

At the next ACCC meeting, we will establish another subcommittee to plan the next Lunch and Learn in the 2017 calendar year.

Alison Chandler and Sam Bruder added that they met with a representative from an Episcopal Church in Hartford that was recently featured in a Hartford Courant news article about their “Black Lives Matter” sign that was defaced to read “Lives Matter.” The representative wants more opportunities to do social engagements in the community and is interested in presenting at

the Judicial Branch in a panel discussion about why a church/religion is associated with social justice. We will consider this opportunity for a future Lunch and Learn.

4. Diversity Week 2016 Status Update

Alison and Sam reported that there are 75 available seats for the Diversity Week Opening Celebration. A reminder will be sent to all employees two weeks before the registration period closes. Alison will e-mail the list of roles for volunteers at the Opening Celebration to all ACCC members. Members were asked to fill-in slots needed to support the week's learning events. District Liaisons will help to promote participation in Diversity Week. Karen Chorney confirmed that the refreshments were ordered for the Opening Celebration.

5. ACCC Mission and Vision Statements

This item was tabled so that the discussion would occur in the presence of Justice Robinson.

6. New Business

Isabel Alvarez reported on the Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at CSSD where almost 100 people attended. CSSD will sponsor an event in October for Disability Employment Awareness Month. A Brown Bag Marathon for the people who completed Foundation in Cultural Responsiveness (FCR) 100 will occur on October 14, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A question was raised whether or not FCR 100 will be required for all Branch employees. It was noted that the course has never been required or mandated by the Chief Justice or Office of Chief Court Administrator; however, both have strongly encouraged and expect that all employees will attend the course. It was also noted that some research says that requiring or mandating cultural competency or diversity training has an adverse effect on its participants. Some felt that we need to do better to encourage participation in the same manner that other courses are promoted (i.e., e-mail announcements and reminders). The Committee agreed that we should strategize on how to get more employees interested in taking the course.

CSSD will host another event in the month of February for Black History Month. It may include a segment on blacks in law enforcement (i.e., police, probation officers, detention officers, state's attorneys, Marshals, sheriffs, etc.).

Troy raised a concern that employees look to the ACCC as experts in matters regarding cultural competency and, therefore, we should ensure that our members take advantage of learning opportunities to enhance their knowledge and growth. The members agreed to take more opportunities during the meeting and external to the meeting to read articles, engage in discussion, and participate in training and other programs.

7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next meeting of the ACCC is November 22, 2016 at 2 p.m.