

To: Tanya Hughes, Executive Director  
From: Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
Re: **CHRO Outreach Activities**  
Date: November 1, 2023

## **Outreach Successes:**

- **October Social Media**  
**Attendees: 1.8K on Facebook and 1,018 on Instagram**  
The CHRO's Social Media Team of Jody Walker-Smith, Courtney Shields, Spencer Hill, and Rachel O'Reilly created 38 posts for the agency's Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- **Cultural Connections, Middletown**  
**Attendees: 20**  
10/5 - Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler, Human Rights Attorney Gabriela Sandoval, Representative Chiedza Rodriguez – provided a CHRO training for the Hispanic community.
- **MLSC Fall interviews**  
**Attendees: 3**  
10/5 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler interviewed prospective summer interns.
- **UConn Law School guest speaker**  
**Attendees: 20**  
10/10 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen was a guest speaker at UConn's Diversity and Inclusion in the Legal Profession class and spoke about working as a lawyer with a disability.
- **Shipman Webinar about the CHRO**  
**Attendees: 250**  
10/10 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler spoke at this webinar regarding CHRO processing and enforcement.
- **Kids Court Academy**  
**Attendees:75**  
10/10-10/24 - Several CHRO staff facilitate the program which is an outgrowth or expansion of the CT Kids Speak and CT Kids Court Programs. CT Kids Court Academy is a free, 17-week attorney and social justice pipeline program for middle school and high school students.
- **Foundations Training for State Agency EEOs and AG Designees**  
**Attendees: 28**  
10/11 - Attorneys Robin Fox, Jody Walker Smith and Spencer Hill provided in person Foundation Training to all new EEO and AG Designees within the state,

consisting of 5 hours of training regarding how to investigate discrimination complaints and the law surrounding them, per Conn. Gen. Stat. 46a-68(b).

- **Sexual Harassment Training**

**Attendees: 18**

10/12 - Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler and Attorney Robin Fox provided in person sexual harassment training to new Attorney General employees with the State of CT.

- **October's DEI Monthly Newsletter**

**Subscribers: 1,054**

10/16 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith led a team with Attorneys Spencer Hill and Megan Graefe, investigator Courtney Shields, and Affirmative Action trainee Jase Olavarria in preparing and disseminating a DEI monthly newsletter.

- **CHRO's DEI Resource Discussion Series**

**Attendees: 10**

10/18 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith led the monthly CHRO's DEI Resource Discussion series – this month's discussion was on intersectional feminism and imposter syndrome.

- **West Haven Crossing Guards**

**Attendees: 30**

10/18 - Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Attorney Robin Fox provided in person sexual harassment training to a group of crossing guards employed by the city of West Haven PD.

- **UConn Human Rights Research Forum**

**Attendees: 20+**

10/18 – Legal Secretary Aubri Petersen - attended a research forum on The Economics of a More Humane Prison System presented by Brittany LaMarr (current JD/MPP student at UConn). Participated in an interactive discussion regarding CT prison reforms necessary to decrease human rights violations. After the presentation, I had the opportunity to meet with Brittany and we discussed the “Clean Slate” reforms and the accessibility of inmates for filing complaints with the CHRO.

- **AG training**

**Attendees: 15**

10/19 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler trained several AAGs about CHRO processing and Public Accommodation law.

- **CBA DE&I Summit**

**Attendees: 100**

10/20 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen and other members of the legal division staff attended this training.

- **CBA's Annual DEI Summit**

**Attendees: 100+**

10/20 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended the annual DEI Summit after preparing and submitting the agency’s DEI Pledge Signatories annual report. Also in attendance were legal directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen, and Attorney Renee Vanden Wall Bake.

- **Judicial Branch DEI Committee’s event: Moderated Fireside Chat with Dr. Robert Livingston – Promoting Racial Equity in the Workplace and Society**

**Attendees: 40**

10/20 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith coordinated members of the legal department and DEI committee to attend this talk about racial equity in the workplace. Also in attendance were Attorney Chiedza Rodriguez, investigators Rachel O’Reilly, Chris Blustein and Gene Cohen, and Affirmative Action trainee Jase Olavarria.

- **CHRO’s DEI Committee Monthly Meeting**

**Attendees: 9**

10/25 – Co-chair and attorney Jody Walker-Smith led the agency’s monthly DEI committee meeting.

- **CT Realtor’s Association**

**Attendees: 40**

10/25 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler provided a training on Domestic Violence.

- **2023 UConn Human Rights Summit**

**Attendees: 100+**

10/26 -27 - Legal Secretary Aubri Petersen wo days of panel discussion on various Human Rights topics, including: Global Democracy & Human Rights; US Democracy Under Assault; and Toward a More Inclusive Democracy. Between sessions I had discussions with several panelist speakers and discussed the role of the CHRO and the work we do with KCA, training and outreach, and legislation. I provided informational pamphlets to panelists and attendees, spoke with several attendees about the complaint process, CT’s protected classes, and directed several individuals to our website that were interested in learning more about the Equity and Disparity studies.

- **Career Day – Laurel Elementary School, Bloomfield**

**Attendees: 200**

10/27 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler, spoke to kindergarteners, first and second graders about careers in Human Rights.

## **Future Outreach Activities:**

### **November 2023**

- **Social Media**

The CHRO's Social Media Team of Jody Walker-Smith, Courtney Shields, Spencer Hill, and Rachel O'Reilly are planning to create posts for the agency's Facebook and Instagram accounts.

- **November DEI Monthly Newsletter**  
TBD – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will lead a team with Attorneys Spencer Hill and Megan Graefe, investigator Courtney Shields, and Affirmative Action trainee Jase Olavarria in preparing and disseminating a DEI monthly newsletter.
- **Fair Housing Training**  
11/1 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler will train members of the public on fair housing laws.
- **"Update training" will be provided in 2 sessions**  
11/8 and 11/14 - Attorneys Robin Fox, Jody Walker Smith and Spencer Hill on November 8 and 14 to approximately 90 people per Conn. Gen. Stat. 46a-68(b)
- **Update Training for State Agency EEOs and AG Designees**  
11/8 and 11/14 – Attorneys Jody Walker-Smith, Robin Fox, and Spencer Hill will provide two 3-hour trainings on updates to discrimination law pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 46a-68 to all existing EEO officers and attorney general designees.
- **One of a Million: The Story of Holocaust Survivor Ruth Weiner**  
11/9 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen will attend the film premiere event and moderate a panel discussion.
- **Town DEI and human rights and relations organizations**  
11/14 - Human Rights Attorney Robin Fox and Human Rights Investigator Jo Keough will be presenting a program entitled CHRO 101 via Teams. This presentation is tailored to and will provide an overview of protected classes in Connecticut, discuss the types of complaints the CHRO handles, and review the CHRO case process.
- **CHRO's DEI Resource Discussion Series**  
11/15 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend the monthly CHRO's DEI Resource Discussion Series – this month's discussion centers around Native American Heritage Month and themes from the book [There There](#) by Tommy Orange.
- **The Law of Hate Symposium**  
11/17– Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend the symposium at UConn Law.
- **WICC Radio - in the Morning**  
11/20 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will appear on the radio to discuss how to counteract implicit bias.
- **CHRO's DEI Committee Monthly Meeting**  
11/29 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith, co-chair of the CHRO's DEI Committee, will lead a monthly meeting including education and discussion on DEI topics.

## **GRANTS**

We wrapped up the three grants from HUD: CARES, Health Equity and COVID-19. We were awarded a HUD partnership grant so that CHRO can partner with the Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CECSEO) to plan a fair housing webinar and video PSA. We have also applied for several grants with OPM to use CARE funds for civil rights convention, conference and to get needed staff and equipment to meet the demands presented post-pandemic.

## **VIDEO PROJECTS**

- **PSA on Allyship**

The Executive Interns of the CHRO have created a public service announcement on allyship. It was released to the public in mid-August of 2020.

- **Life after Incarceration Video Project**

The Executive and Deputy Directors and members of the legal department will begin production of a documentary film on policing, incarceration, and civil rights in Connecticut. The film will focus on Connecticut as a national leader in reducing the number of incarcerated individuals in Connecticut and the civil rights forward thinking and action in Connecticut. It will focus on the housing and employment challenges faced by formerly incarcerated individuals and will be used as a training tool for future seminars and conferences that will focus on this topic. This is a long-term project with a target date of 2022 for completion. The project will focus on the lives of at least three formerly incarcerated individuals and look at any civil rights injustices that may have contributed to the negative outcomes for these three individuals. Two formerly incarcerated individuals were interviewed for the film, by CHRO intern Matt Stayner.

- **What is Affirmative Action? What is Contract Compliance? Video Project**

In order to address the misnomers related to affirmative action and contract compliance the CHRO will develop, produce, post and distribute a short video project about affirmative action and contract compliance, its purpose, who is helped, what it all means, how people in the state of Connecticut are helped by these programs, the detrimental effects of not having these types of programs and how both programs are good for business and business friendly. The project will be led by CHRO Deputy Director, the AA/CC Unit and CHRO Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler.

- **SB3**

On October 1, 2019, the CHRO rolled out its sexual harassment training video that was filmed at 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford. The video is available to all CT employers and their staff. The video complies with the statutory mandate that the CHRO provide training materials and a free training for the public by October 1, 2019. The law changed in 2021 and has been updated; so has the video.

- **From Lemonade to Light Post Documentary**

The CHRO will be producing a documentary film that has been entitled from Lemonade to Light Post. The focus of the film is human trafficking as a civil rights issue in Connecticut. Human trafficking disproportionately affects African American females in Connecticut and the CHRO will define the issues and interview experts who can help

solve the crisis in Connecticut. The CHRO will also take a broader look at the issue to address all the civil rights issues embedded within the subject matter of human trafficking.

## **ACT COMPLIANCE/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OUTREACH**

### **Future Activities:**

None Reported

### **Past Activities:**

- **Contract Compliance Technical Assistance Training – 10/5**  
**Attendees: 20**
- **Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities – 10/5**  
**Attendees: 44**
- **Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities – 10/11**  
**Attendees: 24**

### **AA/CC**

AA TA: 39

AA Meetings: 21

AA Special Projects: 3

CC TA: 3

CC TA Session: 1200

### **Housing**

### **Future Activities:**

None Reported

### **Past Activities:**

- **2023 Greater Waterbury Housing Expo**  
**Attendees: 60**  
9/22 - Housing Unit Supervisor Diane Carter handed out brochures and educating the public about Fair Housing laws.
- **White House Office of Public Engagement Stakeholder Call – Fall Vaccination Campaign – Virtual**

**Attendees: N/A**

10/25 – Housing Representative Shaun Jones

- **White House Roundtable Enhancing the Military Response to Domestic Violence – Virtual**

**Attendees: N/A**

10/25 - Housing Representative Cynthia Dryfe

- **National Fair Housing Training Academy (NFHTA) Basics of Fair Housing – Segment 1**

**Attendees: N/A**

10/30 – 11/2 Housing Representative Jacqueline Elam, attended a HUD, virtual training ensures that FHIP and FHAP participants have a foundational framework, which they can build upon to carry out their duties in a professional and proficient manner.

**Capitol Region**

**Future Activities:**

None Reported

**Past Activities:**

- **Puerto Rican Parade**  
**Attendees: 2000**  
10/8 - Representative Na'eelah Bakari participated in the Hartford Puerto Rican Parade in Hartford Location and provided public outreach.
- **CHRO DEI Committee Meeting**  
10/25 - Representative Ann Gelar attended the CHRO DEI Committee Meeting on Teams

**Eastern Region**

**Future Activities:**

- **Community Engagement Meeting**  
11/02
- **DEI Resource Discussion Series**  
11/15
- **SMT Planning meeting**  
11/17

**Past Activities:**

- **NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner on Friday night at Foxwoods**  
**Attendees: 200**  
10/06 - Representative Rachel O'Reilly and Zachary Cobb attend the dinner.
- **DEI Committee**  
**Attendees: 6**  
10/25 Representative Rachel O'Reilly attended.
- **Promoting Racial Equity in the Workplace and Society at Central Connecticut State University**  
**Attendees: 50**  
10/26 - Representative Rachel O'Reilly attended.
- **SMT Planning Meeting**  
**Attendees: 4**  
10/26 Representative Rachel O'Reilly attended.

### West Central Region

#### **Future Activities:**

#### **Past Activities:**

- **Puerto Rican Day Festival Hartford**  
**Attendees: 1k+**  
10/08 Representative Christopher Blustein, with other CHRO staff, attended the festival to reach the Latin/Hispanic community.
- **Talk at Central University by Dr. Livingston**  
**Attendees: 50+**  
10/20 Representative Christopher Blustein and Representative Gene Cohen attended the talk which focused on promoting racial equity in the workplace and society.

### Southwest Region

#### **Future Activities:**

- **CHRO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Newsletter Subcommittee**  
HRO Representative Courtney Shields will collaborate with her colleagues to edit text, create images, and distribute the November 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter on behalf of the agency and plan the December 2023 CHRO DEI Newsletter.
- **CHRO Diversity & Inclusion Committee**  
HRO Representative Courtney Shields will attend the Diversity & Inclusion Committee's monthly meeting and participate in researching and writing for special projects as needed.



- **CHRO DEI Social Media Team Subcommittee**  
HRO Representative Courtney Shields will update the text and create images for social media posts throughout the month. She will also work with a small team of agency staff to edit and publish all other agency social media posts throughout the month and plan posts for December 2023.
- **CHRO Technology Committee**  
Human Rights Representative Jessica Kohut will attend the November meeting to review and discuss regional tech. concerns and to brainstorm potential future improvements.
- **CHRO Outreach Ambassador Meeting**  
Human Rights Representative Christine Rowan will attend the November meeting to review and discuss possible outreach and education opportunities.

### **Past Activities:**

- **CHRO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Social Media Team Subcommittee**  
**Attendees: 4**  
Southwest HRO Representative Courtney Shields drafted and updated text and created images for agency social media posts. She also worked with a small team of agency staff to edit and publish all other agency social media posts throughout the month and to plan posts for November 2023.
- **CHRO Kids Court Academy**  
**Attendees: 40**  
10/10 & 10/24 Southwest HRO Representatives Debra Drexler and Travis Fuller, and Regional Manager Jamie Rubin participated in the October virtual sessions.
- **CHRO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter Subcommittee**  
**Attendees: 1,066 Newsletter Subscribers**  
10/16 - HRO Representative Courtney Shields collaborated with her colleagues to edit text, create images, and distribute the October 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Newsletter on behalf of the agency and plan the November 2023 CHRO DEI Newsletter.
- **"Encouraging Equity in Special Education"**  
**Attendees:**  
10/20 - HRO Representative Carolyn Anderson attended this virtual webinar focused on the delivery of special education to students in Connecticut, balancing interests of children, parents, schools, administrators, and government. This program explored Connecticut's challenges and opportunities that arise in practice, all with the goal of encouraging equitable and excellent special education for all students. Participants learned about the Legal history and framework that governs delivery of special education to Connecticut students, rights and responsibilities of students, parents, schools, and government, and challenges and opportunities for improvement. This event was hosted by the Connecticut Bar Association.

- **CHRO Technology Committee**

**Attendees: 10**

10/23 - Human Rights Representative Jessica Kohut attended the October meeting to review and discuss regional tech. concerns and to brainstorm potential future improvements.

- **CHRO Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

**Attendees: 4**

10/25 - HRO Representative Courtney Shields attended the Diversity & Inclusion Committee's monthly meeting and participated in researching and writing for special projects as needed.

Media Inquiries: 0

Meetings:4

Inquiries:6

Public hearings: n/a

Sexual Harassment Law: 43 (October) and 7727 (cumulative)