

To: Tanya Hughes, Executive Director
From: Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director
Re: **CHRO Outreach Activities**
Date: July 1, 2025

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Outreach Successes:

- **Social Media**
Followers: 2.1K on Facebook and 1,401 on Instagram
Attorney Jody Walker-Smith created 22 posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts. Anthony Pragano Executive Trainee submitted 12 Outreach posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts.
- **Ridgefield Pride Celebration - Commissioner Alex Harris**
Attendees: 200
06/01 - Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Southwest Region Manager Travis Fuller, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, and Executive Mike Michell tabled and participated at the Ridgefield Pride in the Park event held at Ballard Park, Ridgefield. The team provided information and answered questions regarding services provided by the CHRO to the public.
- **Raising of the Juneteenth Flag**
Attendees: 75
06/02 - Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Executive Micael Mitchell participated in the raising of the Juneteenth flag event in New Haven on the green to celebrate the freedom of Africans that were enslaved in the US.
- **Meeting Tiffany Young - YWCA**
Attendees: 3
06/03 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator, Ana Mitchell met with the Senior Director – Community Engagement and Advocacy for the Hartford Region to discuss opportunities and strategies for the Civil Rights Museum.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**
Attendees: 100+
06/03 - Eighth Kids Court Academy session viewed a collection of films regarding **Indigenous Women & Environmental Justice** and had discussion centered around this year's theme, Environmental Justice, moderated by Ashley Stewart.
- **2025 Kids Court Competition**
Attendees: 50+
06/04 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp hosted the 2025 Kids Court Competition. Nearly 70 Middle and High School students from across the state of Connecticut participated in this essay competition. Students submitted their essays on

one of the five designated topics. The top five essays from each division were selected as finalists to virtually give an oral presentation to this year's panel of judges who were: The Honorable Judge Juliett Crawford, The Honorable Judge Donna Wilkerson-Brillant and CHRO Commissioners Nicholas Kapoor, Lisa Giliberto, Alex Harris, and Edith Pestana.

- **Monthly Investigator Meeting**

Attendees: 10

06/04 - Representative Jo Keough co-hosted a meeting for CHRO Investigators with Jody Walker-Smith.

- **Monthly Community Engagement Meeting**

Attendees: 8

06/05 - Internal meeting chaired by Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and by Legislative Liaison Darcy Strand.

- **Community Engagement Committee**

Attendees: 8

06/05 - Representative Jo Keough attended and took minutes for a meeting for members of the Community Engagement Committee.

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Attendees: 8

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- **OPTIMUS Foundation 27th Annual Golf Classic & Dinner**

Attendees: 200+

06/09 - The OPTIMUS Foundation hosted its 27th annual event, which the CHRO also sponsored. Proceeds to assist the foundation in supporting Optimus Health Care, Inc. deliver family-centered primary care services – both in-person and via telehealth. The event was attended by Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, Storekeeper Michael Mitchell, and Southwest Regional Manager Travis Fuller.

- **Connecticut Bar Association's Connecticut Legal Conference**

Attendees: 200+

06/13 - Attended by Executive Director Tanya Hughes and Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp. "The event comprised of dozens of engaging CLE seminars covering a diverse range of topics in state and federal law. The day also includes an exhibitor showcase featuring a variety of companies and organizations and the CBA Annual Meeting and Luncheon, which features prestigious Connecticut-based and national speakers as well as the installation of the CBA executive committee officers for the approaching bar year."

- **CBA Annual Legal Conference**

Attendees: 200+

06/13 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended the Bar Association’s annual legal conference and attend sessions on DEI and the law.

- **The HOPE Community Resource Fair - Waterbury**

Attendees: 100+

06/14 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp Representative and Sancha Works attended the event is which was hosted by the Waterbury Judicial District State's Attorney's Office, the City of Waterbury, and the Waterbury Police Department at City Hall. It's an indoor event offering free health screenings, state resources, care packages with gift cards, and more. It aims to connect residents with various community resources, including health screenings, substance abuse support, reentry services, and more. The fair is intended to be a one-stop shop for community members seeking support and information.”

- **Juneteenth Celebration - Portland**

Attendees: 100+

06/14 - Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell tabled the event.

- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**

Attendees: 100+

06/17 - Ninth Kids Court Academy Session Case – **Indigenous Environmental Network vs US Dept of State (2019)**. We were honored to have Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Mahon review this case with the KCA students to aid the students in better understanding the intersectionality of the law and the environment.

- **Juneteenth Celebration - Norwalk**

Attendees: 100+

06/19 - Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell tabled the event.

- **Juneteenth - New Haven**

Attendees: 200+

06/21 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp Representative, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, Storekeeper Michael Mitchell, Executive Trainee Anthony Pragano and Representative Sancha Works tabled the event.

- **Food and a Film**

Attendees: 55

06/25 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp hosted the screening of three short documentaries in connection with May's "Asian American Pacific Islander Month", June's "Pride Month", and July's "Black Mental Health Month". Cheryl moderated a discussion on the films with panelists Erick Russell – State Treasurer, Megan Baker – C.W.C.S.E.O Asian Pacific American Legislative Policy Analyst, Tangie McDougald - Executive Director of Community Matters LLC & Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic for

Children and Maria Scarlett - Acting Recruitment and Outreach Specialist. Also present were Outreach Coordinator – Ana Mitchell, Storekeeper – Micheal Mitchell, and Executive Trainee – Anthony Pragano.

- **Community Engagement Committee**

Attendees: 6

06/26 - Representative Jo Keough attended and took minutes for a meeting for members of the Community Engagement Committee.

- **Connecticut Age Well Collaborative at Manchester Senior Center**

Attendees: 27

06/26 – Human Rights Attorney Jerald Lentini tabled the event above “Daring Dialogue: How Ageism and Ableism Impact Our Lives and Community,”. Attorney Lentini spoke briefly about CHRO’s mission as the state’s civil rights enforcement agency and discussed CHRO’s work one-on-one with almost all the attendees.

- **Farmers Market Keefe Community Center – Hamden**

Attendees: 85

06/26 - Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell tabled the event.

- **DEI Committee**

Attendees: 8

06/27 – DEI committee co-chair Attorney Jody Walker-Smith led the committee’s monthly meeting, including discussion of DEI topics and committee projects.

- **CHRO’s Agency-Wide Retreat**

Attendees: 84

06/30 - Executive Director Tanya Hughes and Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp hosted CHRO’s bi-annual agency-wide retreat for employees. Topics and presenters/panelists were as follows:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives - Troy Brown -Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
- Community Engagement and How to Connect with Stakeholders – Panel moderated by Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell
 - Atty. Brooke Goff, Founding Attorney Goff Law Group
 - Werner Oyanadel, Latino & Puerto Rican Policy Director C.W.C.S.E.O
 - Jay Williams, President/CEO Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
 - Tiffany Young, YWCA Senior Director, Community Engagement and Advocacy - Hartford Region
- Civil Rights in an Uncivil Environment - Film & Panel Discussion – Panel moderated by Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp
 - Atty. Gail Hardy, Executive Assistant State’s Attorney
 - Melvette Hill, Executive Director C.W.C.S.E.O
 - Patricia O’Rourke, Executive Director Connecticut Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
 - Atty. Herman Woodard, Jr., Managing Partner, Woodard Law Firm

- Review of Ethics for State Employees presented by Sarah Clark – Director of Education and Communications and Peter Lewandowski - Executive Director Connecticut Office of State Ethics
- Legislative Wrap-up
- Writer's Workshop
- Legal Update Presentation

Future Outreach Activities:

- **Social Media**
The CHRO's Social Media Team - Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will create posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts. Anthony Pragano Executive Trainee will submit the Outreach post.
- **CBA DEI Summit Subcommittee**
07/01 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend a planning meeting on behalf of CHRO for the CT Bar Association's DEI Summit.
- **EEOC Regional Zoom meeting**
07/08 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will attend this event.
- **Intern presentation**
07/09 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will train interns on disability law.
- **Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**
07/14 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp will be attending this meeting
- **CT Management Advisory Counsel**
07/16 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will attend this meeting.
- **Greater Hartford Jazz Festival**
07/18 – 07/20 - Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and several CHRO employees will be tabling at this event
- **DEIBAJ Collaborative Meeting**
07/21 - Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend a meeting of DEI professionals across state agencies to collaborate in efforts to support inclusive workplaces.
- **DEI Committee monthly meeting**
07/25 – DEI committee co-chair Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will lead the committee's monthly meeting, including discussion of DEI topics and committee projects.
- **CHRO intern symposium**
07/30 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen and other staff will attend this symposium.

- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee meeting**

07/30 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell plan to attend the meeting.

- **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 conventions and 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 employees and their staff. The video complies with the statutory mandate that the CHRO provide training materials and 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 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.

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OUTREACH

Future Activities:

None Reported

Past Activities:

- **06/04 - Contract Compliance Technical Assistance Training**
Attendees: 23
- **06/04 - Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities**
Attendees: 2
- **06/23 - Contract Compliance Training for Non-Profits**
Attendees: 6

AA/CC

AA TA: N/A

AA Meetings: 2

AA Special Projects: N/A

CC TA: 1378

CC TA Session: 2

REGIONAL OUTREACH AND HOUSING AT A GLANCE

Housing

Future Activities:

None reported

Past Activities:

- **Kids Court Academy**

Attendees: 59

06/03 – Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard and Housing Representative Shaun Jones attended.

Watched a collection of shorts about Indigenous Women and Environmental Justice, with a discussion held afterward moderated by Ashley Stewart.

- **PurpleEVENT 2025**

Attendees: 200

06/06 – Housing investigator Cyndi Dryfe attended.

The Network provided services to 9,951 individuals including: an emergency shelter, counseling, support programs, court-based victim advocacy, rapid re-housing program, and domestic violence awareness and prevention education. providing services to victims in East Windsor, Enfield, Somers, Suffield, Strafford and Windsor Locks.

- **Make the Road Connecticut Health Fair**

Attendees: 200

06/10 – Housing investigator Cyndi Dryfe and Jacqueline Elam attended.

Meetings that bring together members from all of our committees to discuss important issues that Make the Road CT is working.

- **Tech Committee Monthly Meeting**

Attendees: 6

06/16 – Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard attended.

Went over Co-Pilot rules and discussed how to turn off Co-Pilot. Talked about the new technology process with BITs. Had the regions go over any region wide technology issues, as well as submitted tickets with BITs.

- **Kids Court Academy**

Attendees: 54

06/17 – Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard and Housing Investigator Shaun Jones attended.

Held a discussion about Indigenous People and the Environment with a special guest, Assistant Attorney General Cynthia Mahon.

- **Fabric & Deeper Change Community Workshop Series**

Attendees: 50

06/18 – Housing Investigator Sunasha Dunham-Carson attended.

Fabric provides workshops and training designed to nurture your practice and deepen your learning. We believe in both honoring the wisdom of the collective and the benefit of individualized support. During Fabric, get access to individual guidance, group coaching and peer support spaces. Fabric provides an inclusive and thoughtful space for those working in and alongside their communities to connect, get some work done, rest and learn together.

- **Food and Film Festival**

Attendees: 25

06/25 – Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard attended.

We watched three short documentaries in connection with May's "Asian American Pacific Islander Month", for June's "Pride Month", and for July's "Minority Mental Health Month". Held discussion afterwards with special guest panelist.

Capitol Region

Future Activities:

None reported

Past Activities:

- **CHRO Outreach Committee Meeting**

Attendees: 8

06/04 - Representative Laura Roxbury participated in the virtual Community Engagement Committee meeting.

- **VA New England's 2025 Community Mental Health Summit**

06/05 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMS summit presented by Federal Department of Veterans Affairs, Institute for Learning, Education and Development (ILEAD), VHA Field Accreditation Services, and VA Connecticut Healthcare System with a focus on Veteran suicidality to support public accommodation and services for those affected by suicide in CT. Contributions made to the discussion focused on protected class status, connection between loneliness and suicide, experiences of Veterans in access community supports, identifying VA and community services available to Veterans, how to recognize warning signs with Veterans at risk, and what happens when people call the Veterans Crisis Line.

- **CT Department of Social Services Annual Entitlements Event**

Attendees: 100

06/12 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMA community training presented by CT DSS with a focus on all state agency liaisons and community providers to support public accommodation and services of entitlements to statewide constituents. Contributions made to the discussion included protected class status and understanding barriers to access for marginalized groups seeking to access SNAP, TANF/TFA, and SAGA benefits with enrollments.

- **CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board**

Attendees: 250

06/12- Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMS event/meeting presented by CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board, CT DSS, and DCF

with a focus on Teaching Boys to Cry to support public accommodations and services for those affected by suicide and those affected by a death by suicide in CT. Contributions made to the discussion focused on resources and access, providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **Portland CT Juneteenth Event**

Attendees: 100

06/14 - Representative Laura Roxbury participated in tabling at a community event held at the Portland Middle School in Middletown, CT.

- **West Hartford Town Hall Community Outreach**

Attendees: 1

06/17 - Representative Ann Galer distributed CHRO flyers in both English and Spanish to the West Hartford Town Hall.

- **CT Management Advisory Board**

Attendees: 150

06/18 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez, in his role as elected representative of CHRO, attended virtual TEAMS event/meeting presented by CT Management Advisory Board with a focus on the mandatory orientation to CT MAC and what are the roles of Reps and Alt to satisfy the EBoard agency attendance requirement and CT MAC participation.

- **Capitol Community College Community Outreach**

Attendees: 1

06/18 - Representative Laura Roxbury distributed CHRO brochures at Capitol Community College in Hartford.

- **CHRO DEI Food & Film**

Attendees: 50

06/25 - Trainee Oliver Morris attended a virtual Food and Film event about AAPI Heritage, Pride Month, and Mental Health Awareness.

06/25 – Representative Ann Galer attended a virtual Food and Film event about AAPI Heritage, Pride Month, and Mental Health Awareness.

06/25 – Representative Jose-Arnaldo Guadalupe attended a virtual Food and Film event about AAPI Heritage, Pride Month, and Mental Health Awareness.

- **Hartford Public Library Community Outreach**

Attendees: 1

06/26 - Trainee Oliver Morris provided Hartford Public Library staff and patrons with information/brochures regarding CHRO services.

- **CHRO DEI Education Attendees: 20**

06/27 Representative Franklin Sykes (covering Ann Galer) attended the TEAMS regular DEI committee meeting.

Eastern Region

Future Activities:

None reported

- **DEI Committee Meeting**

Past Activities:

- **GNACC Legislative Breakfast**

Attendees: 80+

06/10 - Cathy Chester attended the Legislative breakfast held at the Holiday Inn in Norwich where the local Senators and Representatives discussed the various bills that passed in the current session and the ones that still needed to be addressed with a question-and-answer period afterward.

- **Sikh Flag Raising Ceremony**

Attendees: 500

06/21- Regional Manager Robert Aldi attended the Sikh Flag Raising Ceremony at Norwich City Hall.

- **DEI Committee**

Attendees: 20

06/27 - Dori Bruce attended the monthly meeting.

West Central Region

Future Activities:

- **City of Waterbury resource fair - Canceled**
06/07 – Rescheduled 06/14

Past Activities:

- **CHRO Kids Court**

Attendees: 40+

06/03 - Representative Robert Moller attended CHRO Kids Court, where he facilitated and participated in discussions surrounding legal and social justice issues.

- **Waterbury Community Resource Fair**

Attendees: 100+

06/14 - Representative Sancha Works attended the resource fair where she informed the community of the CHRO and its services.

- **CHRO Kids Court**

Attendees: 40+

06/17 - Representative Robert Moller attended CHRO Kids Court, where he facilitated and participated in discussions surrounding legal and social justice issues.

- **Juneteenth Event**

Attendees: 100+

06/21 - Representative Sancha Works attended the Juneteenth Village & marketplace/International Festival of Arts and Ideas at New Haven, CT.

- **Food and Film Event**

Attendees: 40+

06/25 - Manager Shawn Burns attended the CHRO's film event which highlighted Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Pride Month, and Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.

Southwest Region

Future Activities:

Past Activities:

- **Ridgefield Pride Celebration**

Attendees: 200

06/01 - Executive Director Tanya Hughes, along with Travis Fuller, Ana Mitchell, and Mike Michelle tabled and participated at the Ridgefield Pride in the Park event held at Ballard Park, Ridgefield. The team provided information and answered questions regarding services provided by the CHRO to the public. There was a very high and diverse public turnout at the event, and we received a steady stream of community members inquiring about our services and enjoying the spinning wheel and CHRO swag.

- **CHRO Kids Court Academy**

Attendees: 50+

06/03 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller attended the Bi-Monthly Kids court Academy Session hosted by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp with participants engaging in discussions/ films relative to topics surrounding civil rights.

- **CHRO Kids Court Competition**

Attendees: 50+

06/04 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller and HRO Representative Martina Seminara attended the Kids Court Competition hosted by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp with participants presenting their essays surrounding civil rights to the panelists.

- **Monthly Investigator Meeting**

Attendees: 10+

06/04 - Southwest HRO Representative Martina Seminara attended the Monthly Regional Investigator meeting to discuss topics and explore solutions regarding the investigative process. This was hosted by Laura and Jody.

- **Technology Committee**

Attendees: 10

06/16 - Southwest Regional HRO Representative Jessica Kohut met with the Commissions Technology Committee to discuss any technology concerns experienced in the regions as well as brainstorming potential future improvements.

- **Groundwork Bridgeport Family Fun Day Community Event**

Attendees: 200

06/21 - HRO Rep Chritine Rowan and Cathy Kendall (Secretary) tabled and participated at the Groundwork Bridgeport Family Fun Day held at Waterview Park, Bridgeport. The team provided information and answered questions regarding services provided by the CHRO to the public. There was a very high and diverse public turnout at the event, and we received a steady stream of community members inquiring about our services and enjoying the spinning wheel and CHRO swag.

Media Inquiries: 0

Legislative Meetings: 5

Legislative Inquiries: 6

Legislative hearings: N/A

Sexual Harassment Law: 42 (June) and 8457 (cumulative)