

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

## **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

### **Outreach Successes:**

- **Social Media**

Followers: Facebook 2.1K and Instagram 1,469

Attorney Jody Walker-Smith created 12 posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts with assistance from Attorney Courtney Shields. Anthony Pragano Executive Trainee submitted 16 Outreach posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts.

- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**

**Attendees: 60+**

09/02 - Kids Court Academy session viewed a film **PBS – Climate Change Along Connecticut's Coast** and had discussion centered around this year's theme, Environmental Justice, moderated by Ashley Stewart.

- **Louder than a Veto Planning Meeting**

**Attendees: 20**

09/04 - Legislative and Administrative Advisor Darcy Strand attended a meeting with the Growing Together CT Coalition to plan a series of forums being held in October regarding the vetoing of HB 5002 (affordable housing and zoning reform).

- **Community Engagement Committee Meeting**

**Attendees: 7**

09/04 - The CEC met and finalized the presentation created for use by any CHRO staff for outreach events.

- **East Catholic High School Convocation**

**Attendees: 440+**

09/05 - Deputy Executive Director, Cheryl Sharp invited as the keynote speaker to students at the convocation on this year's theme, "Accountability" based on the book *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Executive Storekeeper were also part of the presentation.

- **Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**

**Attendees: 40+**

09/08 - Deputy Executive Director, Cheryl Sharp attended this meeting at the Office of the Chief State's Attorney.

- **NE Regional Meeting w/EEOC state funded agencies**  
**Attendees: 4**  
09/09 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler attended this event.
- **EEOC annual Legal Update**  
**Attendees: 5**  
09/11 - Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler attended this meeting.
- **Hartford Pride**  
**Attendees: 2000**  
09/13 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and other staff tabled the event.
- **CBA DEI Summit Subcommittee**  
**Attendees: 6**  
09/16 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended a planning meeting on behalf of CHRO for the CT Bar Association’s DEI Summit.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**  
**Attendees: 60+**  
09/16 - Kids Court Academy session where attorneys, John Letizia and Phyllis Pari of Letizia, Ambrose & Falls P.C. will review the Case – American Electric Power vs. Connecticut (2011) with KCA students
- **Food and Film – CHRO**  
**Attendees: 40**  
09/17 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler attended this event.
- **CT Management Advisory Council monthly meeting**  
**Attendees: 150**  
09/17 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen attended this meeting.
- **Food & Film MLK March**  
**Attendees: 15**  
09/17 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen and other staff attended this event.
- **Food and a Film (August/September/October)**  
**Attendees: 50+**  
09/17 - CHRO will be screening three short documentaries. For International Youth Day, the documentaries are **International Youth Day and Youth Day 2024**. For Voter Registration Month, the documentary is **Out to Vote: A Story of Voting Rights, Voter Suppression & Fight for Democracy**. For the Anniversary of the March in Washington 1963, the documentary is **The March in Washington**.

- First-Ever Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities Joint Employment and Housing Discrimination Education Program**  
**Attendees: 50+**  
 09/18 - Deputy Executive Director, Cheryl Sharp and Managing Director – Housing/Training, Michelle Dumas Keuler, along with Attorneys John Letizia and Phyllis Pari of Letizia, Ambrose & Falls P.C., facilitated this training on housing and employment. Deputy Director Sharp and Managing Director Dumas Keuler were the keynote speakers.
- FH Training/CHRO training**  
**Attendees: 50**  
 09/18 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler and Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp conducted the training.
- Veterans Stand Down – Rocky Hill Location**  
**Attendees: 300**  
 09/19 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith provided information to the public at the annual veteran’s event.
- Veterans Stand Down – Rocky Hill**  
**Attendees: 110**  
 09/19 – Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler and other CHRO staff tabled this event.
- The Greater Hartford Puerto Rican Day Parade**  
**Attendees: 3000+**  
 09/21 - Outreach Coordinator, Ana Mitchell, Executive HRO Trainee Anthony Pragano and other CHRO staff tabled at the event informing them of their rights and reaffirming CHRO’s support of the Hispanic community.
- Majority Leaders' Roundtable on Affordable Housing**  
**Attendees: 40**  
 09/22 - Legislative and Administrative Advisor Darcy Strand attended a public meeting held by Majority Leaders Duff and Rojas regarding affordable housing. This specific session focused on 8-30g.
- CADEP training – LOB**  
**Attendees: 30**  
 09/26 - Legal Director Michelle Dumas Keuler and Attorney Spencer Hill conducted the training.
- DEI Committee monthly meeting**  
**Attendees: TBD**  
 09/26 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend the committee’s monthly meeting.

- **Meeting with Joe Young – Kemet -Human Rights Day PSA**  
**Attendees: 4**  
09/26 – Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell discussed a collaboration between Can Do and CHRO to create PSA for Human Rights Day.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**  
**Attendees: 60+**  
09/30 - Kids Court Academy session viewed the film **Not on our soil: A Climate Justice reality** and had discussion centered around this year's theme, Environmental Justice, moderated by Ashley Stewart.

### **Future Outreach Activities:**

- **Social Media**  
Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will create posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts with assistance from Attorney Courtney Shields and Spencer Hill.
- **CBA DEI Summit Subcommittee**  
10/02 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend a planning meeting on behalf of CHRO for the CT Bar Association's DEI Summit.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**  
10/07 - Kids Court Academy session where CHRO attorneys Gregory Jones, Cheryl Sharp and Michelle Dumas Keuler will review the Case – **Massachusetts vs EPA (2007)** with KCA students.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**  
10/21 - Kids Court Academy session viewed the film **I am Greta** followed by a discussion to be moderated by Ashley Stewart.
- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee meeting**  
10/22 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell plan to attend this meeting
- **Foundations Training**  
10/22 – Attorneys Jody Walker-Smith and Spencer Hill will provide a 5-hour training on the foundations of discrimination law and how to conduct an investigation to all newly hired EEOs and AG designees working for the State.
- **CBA DEI Summit**  
10/24 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend, as a member of the planning committee, the CBA's annual DEI summit at Gateway Community College in New Haven.

- **CBA DE&I Summit**  
10/24 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen and other staff will attend this event.
- **Legal Investigator Training**  
10/28 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen and other staff will train investigators.
- **CT Education DE&I roundtable**  
10/28 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will train about the CHRO.
- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee meeting**  
10/29 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell plan to attend this meeting.
- **Update Training**  
10/30 - Attorneys Jody Walker-Smith and Spencer Hill will provide 3-hour training on updates in discrimination law and how to conduct an investigation to all EEOs and AG designees working for the State who have already received Foundations Training.
- **DEI Committee monthly meeting**  
10/31 - Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend the committee's monthly 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:**

- **09/10 - Contract Compliance Technical Assistance Training**  
**Attendees: 18**
- **09/10 - Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities**  
**Attendees: 11**

### **AA/CC**

AA TA: 3

CC TA: 1367

AA Meetings: 2

CC TA Session: 2

AA Special Projects: N/A

## REGIONAL OUTREACH AND HOUSING AT A GLANCE

### Housing

#### **Future Activities:**

None reported

#### **Past Activities:**

- **Kids Court Academy**

**Attendees: 35**

09/02 - Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard watched the film “PBS” – Climate Change Along Connecticut’s Coast and held discussion afterward with moderator Ashley Stewart.

- **University of Chicago Law School “Advancing the Fair Housing Agenda” Conference**

**Attendees: 100**

09/04 – 09/05 Housing Investigators Cynthia Dryfe and Jacqueline Elam attended this year’s conference addressed some of the most pressing issues facing the fair housing community today, such as climate and disaster relief and their relationship to housing and lending discrimination; availability of insurance during and after a natural disaster and how it may give rise to new forms of redlining; how artificial intelligence affects who can rent or buy a home and how (or could) it may be used by fair housing advocates as a tool to fight discrimination.

- **History in Color – The Elm City’s Journey to Equal Education Exhibit**

**Attendees: 200**

09/04 - Housing Investigator Sunasha Dunham-Carson attended Trace New Haven’s fight for equal Education from the early schoolhouses to the student-led activism of today. Featuring 3D classroom installations, student-created art, and an extensive chronological timeline.

- **Kids Court Academy**

**Attendees: 35**

09/05 - Housing Secretary, Stephanie Chenard and Housing Investigator Shaun Jones watched a film on the “Global Environmental Justice Network” and held a discussion afterward with moderator Ashely Stewart.

- **Technology Committee Monthly Meeting**

**Attendees: 7**

09/08 - Housing Secretary, Stephanie Chenard went over the gov.tech conference and discussed Co-pilot in the workforce.

- **Kids Court Academy**

**Attendees: 44**

09/16 - Housing Secretary, Stephanie Chenard and Housing Investigator Shaun Jones reviewed the case American Electric Power Company vs. Connecticut (2011) with special presenters, Attorneys John Letizia and Phyllis Pari of Letizia, Ambrose & Falls, P.C.

- **Stand Down**

**Attendees: 100+**

09/19 - Housing Investigators Cythina Dryfe and John Torres attended.

**Capitol Region**

**Future Activities:**

None reported

**Past Activities:**

- **CHRO CEA/Outreach Committee Meeting**

**Attendees: 5**

09/04 - Representative Laura Roxbury attended the monthly agency-wide outreach committee meeting.

- **CHRO IT Committee Meeting**

**Attendees: 8**

09/08 - Trainee Oliver Morris participated attended virtual Teams monthly committee meeting.

- **CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board**

**Attendees: 10**

09/10 - 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 planning the 2026 Inspiring Hope Suicide Prevention Conference. Contributions made to the discussion focused on establishing dates, theme, speakers, outreach, information tables, audience, etc., providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board**

**Attendees: 35**

09/11 - 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 the annual National Suicide Day and launching a new year of suicide prevention 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 updates from the Armed Forces/CT Governor's Challenge, Attempt Survivors/Lived Experience, Data to Action, Education & Advocacy, Intervention/Postvention Response, Lethal Means, Zero Suicide Learning Community,



and Awareness Campaign/Communication committees providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **Hartford LGBTQIA+ Pride Parade**

**Attendees: 1500**

09/13 – Representative Jose Arnaldo Guadalupe attended in-person event Hartford LGBTQIA+ Pride Parade, manning table, and distributing information for 4.00 hrs.

- **NAACP National Meeting**

**Attendees: 35**

09/16 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMS event/meeting on Defending Democracy Together with a focus on democracy in its current state and discussing civic engagement, community action, and building resilient systems that uphold fairness, equity, and accountability.

- **Quinnipiac Student Intern Training**

**Attendees: 11**

09/16 - Representative Laura Roxbury gave a presentation to law student interns on CHRO process/mediation.

- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5**

**Attendees: 35**

09/16 – Representative Franklin Sykes attended virtual TEAMS discussion on American Electric Power Company vs. Connecticut (2011).

- **CT CHRO Food and Film**

**Attendees: 35**

09/17 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMS food and film on International Youth Day, Voter Registration Month, and Anniversary of the March on Washington 1963.

- **CT Management Advisory Board**

**Attendees: 150**

09/17 – 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 monthly board meeting and upcoming Manager Appreciation event.

- **Hartford Puerto Rican Day Parade**

**Attendees: 2000+**

09/21 – Trainee Oliver Morris attended In-Person the Hartford Puerto Rican Day Parade and tabled the event for 2.5 hours.

- **CT Behavioral Health Partnership (CT BHP)**

09/23 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtual TEAMS event/meeting presented by CT BHP with a focus on a statewide forum addressing Nurturing Futures: Supporting Substance Use Recovery During Pregnancy & Beyond. Contributions made to the discussion focused on difference between substance use and substance use disorders experienced by perinatal individuals, best practices to support

perinatal individuals to ensure continuity of care, stigma and discrimination associated with perinatal substance use including the impact on family outcomes, roles of peer support, identifying key local and national resources that offer support, and providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **CT Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection**

**Attendees: 35**

09/25 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended In-Person event/meeting presented by CT DESSP with a focus on Stop Hate Together: Community Program About Hate Crimes. Contributions made to the discussion focused on the rise of the number of hate crimes in CT in recent years, how the state and communities are responding, how hate crimes are identified/reported/investigated, and providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **CT Substance Exposed Pregnancy Initiative**

**Attendees: 150**

09/26 – Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended In-Person event/meeting presented by SEPI-CT, DMHAS, DCF, and Wheeler Clinics with a focus on Celebrating Families in Recovery. Contributions made to the discussion focused on lived experience through recovery journey, the role of family in recovery, optimal care in the postpartum period for families affected by substance use, ways to explore supporting families and relationship building within families and professionals who serve them, and providing cultural and protected class perspective to historically marginalized groups in CT.

- **CHRO DEI Education and Outreach Community Meeting**

**Attendees: 20**

09/26 - Representative Laura Roxbury attended the TEAMS regular outreach committee meeting, covering for Franklin due to Intake.

## **Eastern Region**

### **Future Activities:**

### **Past Activities:**

- **Community Engagement Meeting**

**Attendees: 6**

09/06 – Regional Manager Robert Aldi attends the monthly meeting.

- **Veterans Stand Down - Norwich**

**Attendees: 100+**

09/19 – HR Investigators Zach Cobb and Mario Garrido attended the yearly event to honor our Veterans with information and services available to them throughout the state.

- **Celebrate Cultural Diversity**

**Attendees: 300+**

09/29 - HR Investigators Zach Cobb and Mario Garrido will attend the yearly Rotarian event which brings a sampling of food, live entertainment and fun from the various cultures residing in Norwich.

- **DEI Committee**

**Attendees: 10-12**

09/29 - HR Investigators Dori Bruce attends the monthly meetings.

## **West Central Region**

### **Future Activities:**

### **Past Activities:**

- **Kid's Court Academy**

**Attendees: 50+**

09/02 Representative Christopher Blustein attended the meeting which focused on PBS and Climate Change Along Connecticut's Coast.

- **Hartford Pride Festival**

**Attendees: 2000+**

09/13 - Representative Robert Moller attended and participated in the Hartford Pride Festival 2025.

- **Kid's Court Academy**

**Attendees: 50+**

09/16 - Representative Christopher Blustein attended the meeting which focused on a case (American Electric Power Company vs Connecticut). Also discussed was the Clean Air Act and the air quality part of environmental discrimination.

- **Youth Day Food & Film Festival**

**Attendees: 30+**

09/17 - Manager Shawn Burns and Representative Christopher Blustein attended the celebration of the power of the youth in our community. The lectures and videos focused on youth activism & voting, explaining what power youths have in shaping our culture and government.

- **Stand-Down Veterans Event**

**Attendees: 300+**

09/19 - Representative Christopher Blustein attended the Rocky Hill location and conducted outreach, advertisement, and education about CHRO services.

## **Southwest Region**

### **Future Activities:**

### **Past Activities:**

- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**

**Attendees: 15**

09/04 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller attended the CEA Committee meeting via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.

- **Technology Committee**

**Attendees: 10**

09/08 - 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.

- **CHRO Kids Court Academy**

**Attendees: 50+**

09/16 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller attended the Bi-Monthly Kids court Academy Session hosted by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp with participants engaging in discussions/ films related to topics surrounding civil rights.

- **Hangtime Discussion/ CT Hall of Change**

**Attendees: 50**

09/16 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller, tabled and participated at the Bridgeport Hangtime Meeting in Bridgeport. He 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 Food and Film: International Youth Day, Voter Registration Month and Anniversary of the March in Washington 1963**

**Attendees: 50**

09/17 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller attended the **International Youth Day, Voter Registration Month and Anniversary of the March on Washington 1963** hosted by Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp.

- **Veterans Stand Down Bridgeport/ Stamford/ Danbury**

**Attendees: 200+**

09/19 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Investigators Matt Diaz and Christine Rowan as well as Cathy Kendall tabled at the respective events. The Team engaged the Veterans and the public and communicated the Commission's mission/ purpose. Also, networked with other agencies and developed relationships for future events.

Media Inquiries: n/a

Legislative Meetings: 16

Legislative Inquiries: 18

Legislative hearings: n/a (during off session)

Sexual Harassment Law: 23 (September) and 8539 (cumulative)