

Connecticut Child Support Policy Conference

Shaping the Future for Families in Connecticut: The Child Support/Fatherhood Connection

June 27, 2014

Central Connecticut State University



Co-sponsored by the Department of Social Services
and Central Connecticut State University
in collaboration with federal, state and local partners

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Dear Conference Participant,

Good morning and welcome to our 2014 Policy Conference, “Shaping the Future for Families in Connecticut: The Child Support/Fatherhood Connection.”

We are together today as state and local professionals to highlight the important role that child support plays in strengthening families, and the progressive changes in child support at the Federal and state levels to achieve that goal. Building on research and empirical data that supports that fact that children are better off when both parents are involved, our policy conference will share best practices that fully integrate child support services and the connection to father engagement. In addition, we will identify some service gaps, areas for improvement, and begin a meaningful discussion about how Connecticut can better integrate formal child support services with programs that provide essential supports for parents, both custodial and noncustodial.

We have partnered with the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement so that we can be aware of the work they have been doing to identify alternative ways to establish and enforce child support orders that promote communication, mediation, compliance, and family and child wellbeing. I thank Vicki Turetsky for serving as our conference keynote speaker and providing a rich framework for the day. In addition, I want to thank her for participating on our panel discussion that shapes our thinking around healthy relationships and child well-being.

During the morning plenaries, you’ll hear from my Department’s leadership about the Executive Branch side of child support and the *John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut*. Judicial Leadership will share their efforts in supporting custodial and noncustodial parents throughout that crucial part of the child support process. We also have coordinated a panel discussion that includes experts in domestic violence, fatherhood, parent education and shared parenting, to share their wealth of knowledge in successful co-parenting and ideas to enhance the systems’ interaction with families.

We hope you find the conference informative and relevant to the work you do each day, and encourage your active participation as we put forth new ideas on ways to engage more families in the child support program and to help low-income non-custodial parents achieve compliance, establish financial stability and fulfill their child support obligations. Thank you for joining us today. I look forward to a dynamic discussion throughout the day, and thank you for joining us.

Sincerely,

Roderick P. Bremby, Commissioner
Department of Social Services

***Shaping the Future for Families in Connecticut:
The Child Support/Fatherhood Connection***

June 27, 2014

Central Connecticut State University

Torp Theater, Davidson Hall

9:00am – 3:00pm

MORNING AGENDA

- 8:30am** **Registration/Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00am** **Opening Remarks**
Raymond Singleton, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Social Services
- 9:10am** **Welcome**
Roderick Bremby, Commissioner
Department of Social Services
- 9:30am** **Keynote Address**
Vicki Turetsky, Commissioner
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services,
Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child
Support Enforcement
- 10:45am** **Break**
- 11:00am** **Video: *It's About the Kids***
Anthony Judkins, Program Manager
Department of Social Services
- 11:15am** **Connecticut's IV-D Program:
Where Has It Been – Where Is It Going?**
David Mulligan, Esq., Director
Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
Department of Social Services
- 11:35am** **Connecticut's Fatherhood Initiative**
Anthony Judkins
- 11:45am** **Our Co-Parenting Story**
Monica Berrios & Christian Rodriguez

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AFTERNOON AGENDA

- 12:00pm** **Lunch (Memorial Hall, Constitution Room)**
- 1:15pm** **Capias Mittimus: When a Summons Isn't Enough**
Tony Miele, Police Officer
Department of Social Services
- 1:30pm** **The Judicial Side of Child Support**
Charisse Hutton, Director
Judicial Branch, Support Enforcement Services

Norma Sanchez-Figueroa, Family Support Magistrate
Judicial Branch, Family Support Magistrate Division
- 1:55pm** **Panel Discussion**
Co-Parenting: Developing Healthy Relationships
Moderator
Diana DiTunno, OSD Consultant & Project Manager
Department of Social Services

Panelists
Vicki Turetsky, DHHS, ACF, OCSE
Liza Andrews, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence
John Clapp, Shared Parenting Council of Connecticut
Mimi Donegan, Yardley Associates
Michael Donegan, Yardley Associates
Barbara Tinney, New Haven Family Alliance, Inc.
- 2:45-3:00pm** **Closing Remarks – Next Steps**
Raymond Singleton, Deputy Commissioner

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Vicki Turetsky, Commissioner

Office of Child Support Enforcement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families

In 2009, Vicki Turetsky was appointed Commissioner for the federal Office of Child Support. As Commissioner, her priorities include implementing family-centered strategies to support parental employment and involvement, modernizing federal and state technology to increase program efficiency, expanding the tribal child support program, and preparing for generational change. Ms. Turetsky brings more than 30 years of experience as a public administrator and advocate for low-income families. She is a nationally recognized expert in family policy, and is instrumental in efforts to boost child support payments to families and establish realistic child support policies that encourage fathers to work and play an active parenting role. Prior to her appointment, she served as the Director of Family Policy at the Center for Law and Social Policy, and was a visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. She also has held positions at the U.S. Corporation for National and Community Service, MDRC, Union County Legal Services in New Jersey, the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. She received her B.A. from the University of Minnesota and her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. She has received a number of honors, including the 2014 *Burton Award for Government Service*, 2006 NCSEA "Champion of Children" Award, and the 2000 OCSE "Lifelong Achievement" Award. In 2013, she was named by Newsweek as one of "30 Leaders in the Fight for Black Men." She also received one of first Minnesota "STEP" Awards in 1987 cited by Osborne and Gaebler, *Reinventing Government*.

Roderick L. Bremby, Commissioner

Connecticut Department of Social Services

Roderick L. Bremby was appointed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy as Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS) in March 2011, directing initiatives in such areas as health care program restructuring, modernization of technology and business processes for improved client service delivery, and implementation of budget and legislative program changes. Commissioner Bremby joined Connecticut state government after an extensive public-sector career in Kansas and Texas, and academic service at the University of Kansas. From 2003 to 2010, Commissioner Bremby served as the Secretary (chief executive officer) of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, that state's combined public health and environmental protection agency, where he led programs dedicated to providing disease surveillance and prevention efforts, bioterrorism planning guidance, local and rural health assistance, health care and environmental information, and statewide health promotional campaigns. From 2000 to 2003, Commissioner Bremby served as an Assistant Research Professor at the University of Kansas, where he also served as Associate Director of the university's Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development, and coordinated the launch of the Institute for Community Health and Development. Commissioner Bremby has contributed volunteer services to many civic endeavors, including service on the Boards of Kansas Action for Children, and the Kansas Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency. He co-founded the Lawrence Partnership for Children and Youth, a group fostering community collaboration on behalf of the well-being of children and youth. The Commissioner holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in communication studies and psychology, and a master of public administration degree, both from the University of Kansas. Awards include the national Sierra Club's 2011 Distinguished Achievement Award; the 2010 Kansas Public Health Association President's Award; the 2009 Kansas Natural Resource Council Environmental Action Award; and the 2008 Kansas Public Administrator of the Year recognition from that state's Chapter of the American Society of Public Administration.

Raymond Singleton, Deputy Commissioner of Programs
Connecticut Department of Social Services

Raymond Singleton, was appointed as Deputy Commissioner of Programs in July of 2013 to provide oversight of the agency's social service portfolio, including: Medicaid, TANF/TFA, Child Support Enforcement, Community Services and Social Services. He weaves his ministry into programs that serve families who live close or under the economic poverty line. Under the leadership of Commissioner Roderick Bremby, Ray has been charged as the Project Sponsor for ImpaCT and ConneCT Projects. He also provides oversight to the Division of Integrated Services (DIS), which aims to breakdown program silos and integrate holistic services through federal and state-funded programs. Under Ray's oversight are the agency's significant works to re-design the state's TANF Program with key priorities to improve our service-delivery, reduce generational poverty, and increase economic self-sufficiency through quality job gains that pay above minimum wage. In addition, Ray has contributed to the agency's overall implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act, working to resolve litigation, improving operations, and designing processes that improve the state's overall infrastructure. During the last decade, Ray served as an appointee of Commissioner Robert Doar and the Mayor's Office in NYC. His primary responsibilities included managing budgets that total over \$150 million, administering services to over 2 million low-income New Yorkers annually, and creating innovative programs that streamline services and improve efficiencies. Ray was awarded the Commissioner's Professionalism, Accountability, and Integrity Award (PAI) for Individual Excellence and at the invitation of Commissioner Doar, Ray completed an Executive Management Program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy's School of Government. Originally from Wolcott, CT, Ray attended Sacred Heart High School in Waterbury, and then, college in Boston and New York City. Commissioner Singleton completed his studies at Northeastern University's Arts and Science Program and attended New York University's Clinical MSW Program. Ray is the proud father of three children ages, 16, 14, and 9.

David A. Mulligan, Esq., Director, Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
Connecticut Department of Social Services

David Mulligan has served as the IV-D Director since January 2009. Prior to accepting the position of Director, David worked for the Bureau of Child Support Enforcement for over 32 years as an Investigator, Lead Investigator, Supervisor and Policy Consultant. He began his tenure at DSS as an Eligibility worker. David graduated from Cornell University with major in Sociology and is a UConn Law School graduate. He has been an attorney since 1983. David is married and is the proud father of two children and two stepchildren. He serves as organist and choir director for his church, and hobbies include gardening, stone wall building, home renovation, hiking, bluegrass banjo and guitar.

Anthony Judkins, B.S., Program Manager
Connecticut Department of Social Services

Anthony (Tony) Judkins has been with the Connecticut Department of Social Services for 21 years. Over the last 15 years he has served as Program Manager for the *John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut (Initiative)*, which has recently transitioned to the Department's Bureau of Child Support Enforcement (BCSE). The *Initiative* is statewide program that promotes the positive involvement of fathers with their children by providing dads with the support they need to get involved and stay connected to their children. Prior to transitioning the BCSE, Tony served in the same capacity in the Office of Strategic Planning, where he was also responsible managing an \$11.3 million dollar budget annually for state and federal fatherhood programming, the Community Services Block Grant; which provides core funding to local agencies to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities and to empower low-income families to become self-sufficient and the Department's Human Services Infrastructure (HSI) initiative, a partnership with the state's twelve Community Action Agencies (CAAs), which seeks to build a coordinated social services system that helps people access the services they need to gain or maintain self-sufficiency. From 2006-2011 Tony served as the Department's Project Director for the Federal Promoting Responsible Fatherhood grant, where he was responsible for the planning and implementation of strategies that address the three authorized grant activities: Healthy Marriage, Responsible Parenting and Economic Stability. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1989 from Sacred Heart University. Tony is the proud father of two wonderful children AJ (29) who works for the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, MD and Chase (14), a precocious ninth grader who loves basketball and attends Kolbe Cathedral High School.

Christian Rodriguez and Monica Berrios

Christian Rodriguez and Monica Berrios are the proud parents of two sons who keep them very busy! They are both graduates of Bassick High School in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Christian is also a graduate of the GBAPP Teen Fathers Program, and Monica is a graduate of the Teen Parents Program for moms at Bassick High School. Christian and Monica have been together for seven years. Monica works as a Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA) and Christian completed the CNA program and is currently searching for employment in that field. In the meantime, he is working part-time as a Peer Educator in an abstinence-only program, speaking with seventh graders about his experiences as a teen father. Christian and Monica enjoy going out to eat and to the movies – when they get the chance! Christian loves playing basketball and catch with his three-year-old Kaiden, and is looking forward to having his newborn son join the games.

Anthony Miele, Police Officer
Department of Social Services, Bureau of Child Support Enforcement

Anthony Miele is a retired Lieutenant from the West Hartford Police Department, where he served for twenty-eight years. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration. During his tenure with the West Hartford Police Department, Tony held the titles of Patrol Officer, Swat Team Operator, Detective, Patrol Sergeant and Patrol Lieutenant/Shift Commander. As Patrol Lieutenant he supervised four Patrol Sergeants, twenty-two Officers, and four civilian Dispatchers. In his current role with the Bureau of Child Support Enforcement, he is responsible for executing arrest warrants for Family Court for people who fail to appear in court for their support enforcement cases.

**Charisse Hutton, Esq., Director
Judicial Branch Support Enforcement Services**

For nearly fifteen years Attorney Charisse Hutton has been the Director of Support Enforcement Services, a Judicial Branch agency and the largest partner in the Connecticut child support program which collects over \$300 million a year in child support payments. Her agency monitors and enforces over 160,000 child support orders and helps parents modify them. Under her leadership the agency has worked to be more effective serving parents who are non-English speaking, inmates or ex-offenders, or members of other special populations. In 2001 Ms. Hutton received the CT Fatherhood Initiative's Community Recognition Award for her leadership in pursuing father-friendly policies and fostering systemic change in the child support program. Attorney Hutton's involvement in the Connecticut child support program dates back to 1991 when she oversaw the child support program as Deputy Commissioner for the CT Dept. of Human Resources. Attorney Hutton later worked as Deputy Director with the Court Operations Division of the Connecticut Superior Court where she was the primary author of the *Do It Yourself Divorce Guide*, and designed and implemented Connecticut's first Court Service Center, a nationally recognized assistance program for self-represented litigants which is now found in every judicial district courthouse in the state. Attorney Hutton has a diverse background in law, public administration and human services. She received her Juris Doctor from New York University School of Law in 1985, after graduating magna cum laude from Augustana College. Prior to her career with the State of Connecticut, she practiced law with New Haven Legal Assistance Association representing low-income persons and community groups in state and federal court. Attorney Hutton taught in the clinical legal program at the University of Connecticut School of Law. She is also a trained volunteer mediator and facilitator for Community Mediation, Inc. in the greater New Haven area where she lives.

**The Honorable Norma I. Sanchez-Figueroa
State of Connecticut, Superior Court**

Norma I. Sanchez-Figueroa was appointed by Connecticut's Governor Malloy in 2011 to serve as a Family Support Magistrate. Prior to joining the bench, she practiced law and owned her own firm for over 18 years focusing primarily in the area of family law. She served clients in the greater Hartford area and other parts of Connecticut and often times represented and protected children as attorney for minor children and/or as guardian ad litem in highly contested cases involving custody, visitation and child support issues. She understands and supports strongly the fatherhood practices and initiatives. Magistrate Sanchez-Figueroa is a graduate of Brandeis University and Boston College Law School.

**Liza Andrews, Communications and Public Policy Specialist
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

Liza Andrews joined CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) in September 2012 as its Communications and Public Policy Specialist. CCADV is the state's leading voice for domestic violence victims and those agencies that serve them. Liza is responsible for developing and advocating for policies that strengthen Connecticut's response to domestic violence. She also initiates CCADV's media engagement and produces its general publications, as well as maintains the organization's website. Prior to joining CCADV, Liza served as the Public Policy Director at CT Association of Nonprofits where she advocated for increased funding and streamlined contracting processes for nonprofit health and human services providers. Liza has also previously served as the legislative aide to State Senator Gayle Slossberg where she was responsible for constituent services and issue research. She received her bachelor's degree and master of social work degree from the University of Connecticut.

John Clapp

Shared Parenting Council of Connecticut

John M. Clapp has been active in the shared parenting movement since 1995 and chair of the Shared Parenting Council of Connecticut since it was incorporated in 2002. He is the proud grandparent of a two year old girl. His Vision: The family court system awarding and enforcing for children the right to have both parents actively involved in their lives. Children retain good relationships with mother and father. In custody disputes, emphasis should be placed on “the willingness and ability of each of the parents to facilitate and encourage such continuing parent-child relationship between the child and the other parent as is appropriate which shall include compliance with any court orders. (CT Gen Statutes, Section 46b)”

Mimi Donegan, MSW and Michael Donegan, MSW

Yardley Associates

Mimi Donegan and Michael Donegan are graduate level social workers with over fifty years of combined experience working closely with children and their families in a variety of clinical and non-clinical settings. Having personally facilitated the Parent Education program for twenty years together, they provide exceptional educational services to parents who are separating or divorcing. Currently, Michael and Mimi also work at the Loomis Chaffee School where Michael serves as the Dean of Students and Mimi teaches Developmental Psychology.

Barbara J. Tinney, MSW, Executive Director

New Haven Family Alliance, Inc.

Barbara Tinney, a native of the city of New Haven is the Executive Director of the New Haven Family Alliance, Inc. (NHFA) serving in that capacity for seventeen years. Ms. Tinney is also an adjunct faculty member at the Southern Connecticut State University Department of Social Work. Barbara has worked in the social work field for over 25 years. She earned her bachelors' degree from New Haven's Albertus Magnus College and her Masters in Psychiatric Social Work from Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts. Ms. Tinney worked for the Northeast Utilities Holding Company for ten years, holding positions as Management Development Specialist and Equal Employment Opportunity Administrator for all system companies. Barbara's concern about quality of life issues for New Haven's children, adolescents and families prompted her return to the public sector in 1993. Her service to the New Haven community has been recognized by a number of organizations including the State of Connecticut General Assembly, the City of New Haven's Aldermanic Board, New Haven Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Greater New Haven Business and Professional Association, Aids Interfaith, the Elm City Clubs of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Chi Omicron Chapter, The Help Alliance and the Perfect Blend. Barbara is a proud mother and grandmother. She remains committed to social justice, economic equity, strengthening families and supporting parents, family wellness, youth development and community building.